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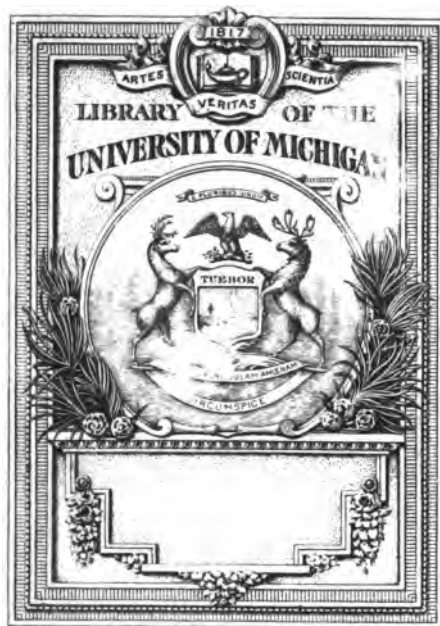
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INDUSTRY

AND

PROPERTY

A PLEA FOR TRUTH AND HONESTY IN
ECONOMICS, AND FOR LIBERTY AND
JUSTICE IN SOCIAL REFORM.

BY

GEORGE BROOKS

(FORMERLY MINISTER OF ROBERT-STREET CHURCH, GROSVENOR-SQUARE,
LONDON, W.; LIBERAL CANDIDATE FOR DURHAM IN 1886).

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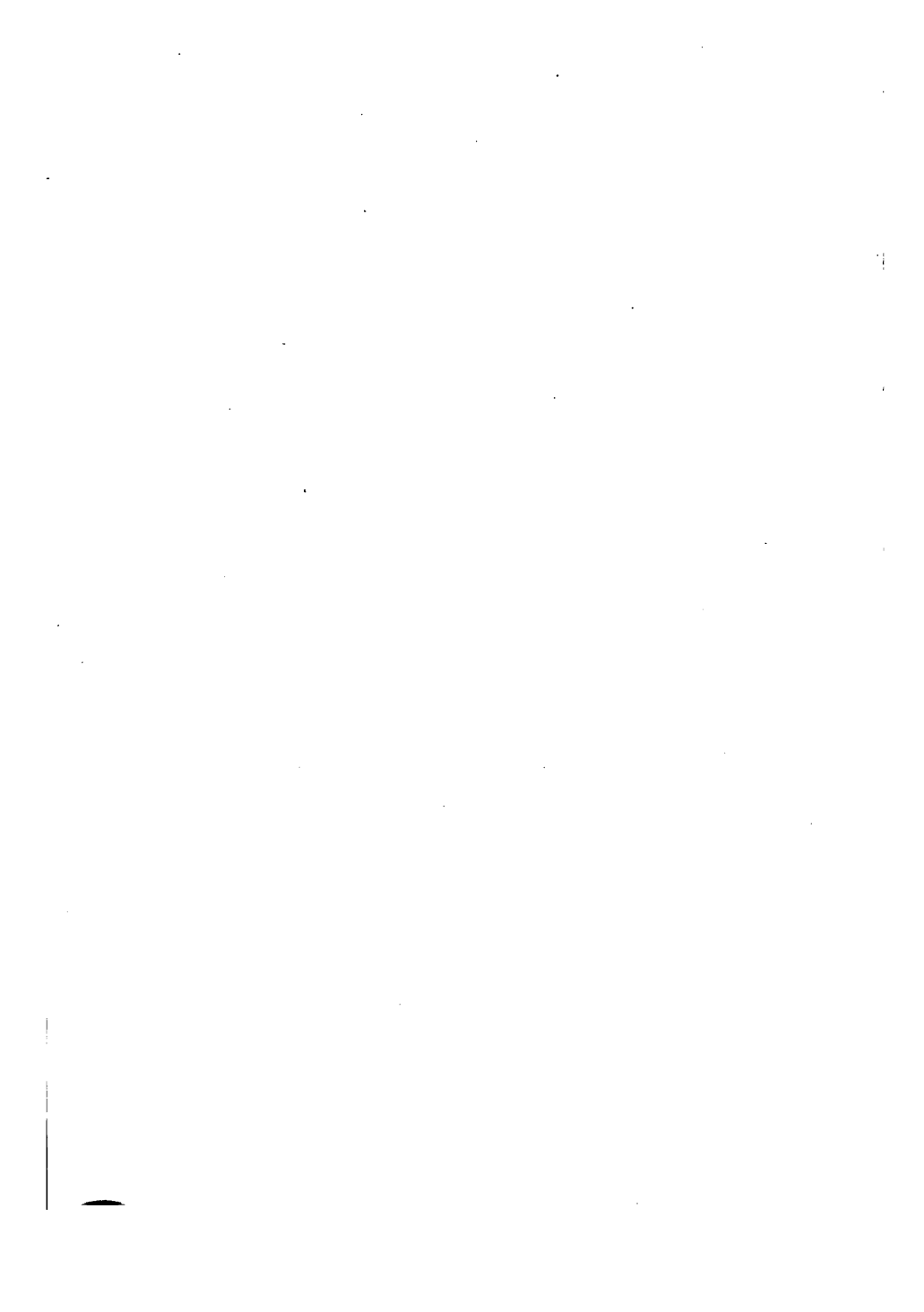
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TO THE
FREE AND INDEPENDENT
WORKING MEN OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND IRELAND,
AND TO EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYED THROUGHOUT THE
CIVILISED WORLD,
THE PRESENT EDITION OF THIS WORK IS RESPECTFULLY
DEDICATED BY THEIR SINCERE FRIEND
AND FELLOW-WORKER,
THE AUTHOR.



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SYNOPSIS OF THE WORK.

EVERYWHERE throughout this work the following fundamental principles are either expressed or implied :

1.—That the interference of the State with the conditions of Adult Labour, except for the protection of workpeople from dangers to health and life, is unwise and injurious ; the regulation of the hours and wages of such labourers being altogether outside and beyond the function of Government.

2.—That the tendency of a people to transfer to the shoulders of the State responsibilities which ought to be borne by the individual citizen is a sure symptom of national decay.

3.—That Capital has its rights no less than Labour ; that Labour has its duties as well as Capital.

4.—That the first right of Labour is that it should be Free ; while the first right of Capital is that it should be Secure.

5.—That both Capital and Labour have the right to combine their forces for legitimate ends ; but that both should exercise this right in subordination to the higher rights of the community at large ; and that any combination, either of Labour or Capital, which seeks to use its power for selfish and sectional ends, against the common weal, is illegitimate and reprehensible.

6.—That it is the inherent right of every labourer to dispose of his labour as he thinks fit, without coercion from

others, and that correlatively every employer has the inherent right to manage his business according to his own convictions, without dictation from outsiders.

7.—That Capital and Labour are inter-related and inter-dependent, and to some extent *identical*, inasmuch as Capital itself is Labour in another form, being that part of Labour which has been *accumulated* in the past to supply the needs of the present : that the capitalist is himself a worker ; that therefore, Capital and Labour cannot truly be antagonists, whose interests lie in divergent and opposing directions, but must always be allies and co-adjutors, whose fundamental and ultimate aims are the same, however much their immediate interests may *appear* to differ ; and that, consequently, a state of war between them is unnatural and irrational.

8.—That Labour is the instrument which Capital (or past Labour) uses in the work of production.

9.—That wages consist of that portion of the profit of production, which is paid out of the results of past Labour (or Capital) ; and which the workman contracts to receive as his full and final share of the results earned by the conjoined efforts of Labour and Capital.

10.—That neither Capital nor Labour primarily gives value to commodities, but only an effective demand for those commodities on the part of those who desire them.

11.—That an employer, whose interests are bound up with those of his workmen, is, on every principle of reason and common-sense, likely to prove a truer friend to those workmen than a professional agitator who has no interests in common with the workmen, and whose chief concern may be to serve himself by exploiting them.

12.—That Labour conflicts and strikes can be avoided only by the exercise of a large and tolerant spirit on the part of employers, and by the growth of an intelligent and reasonable temper among workmen.

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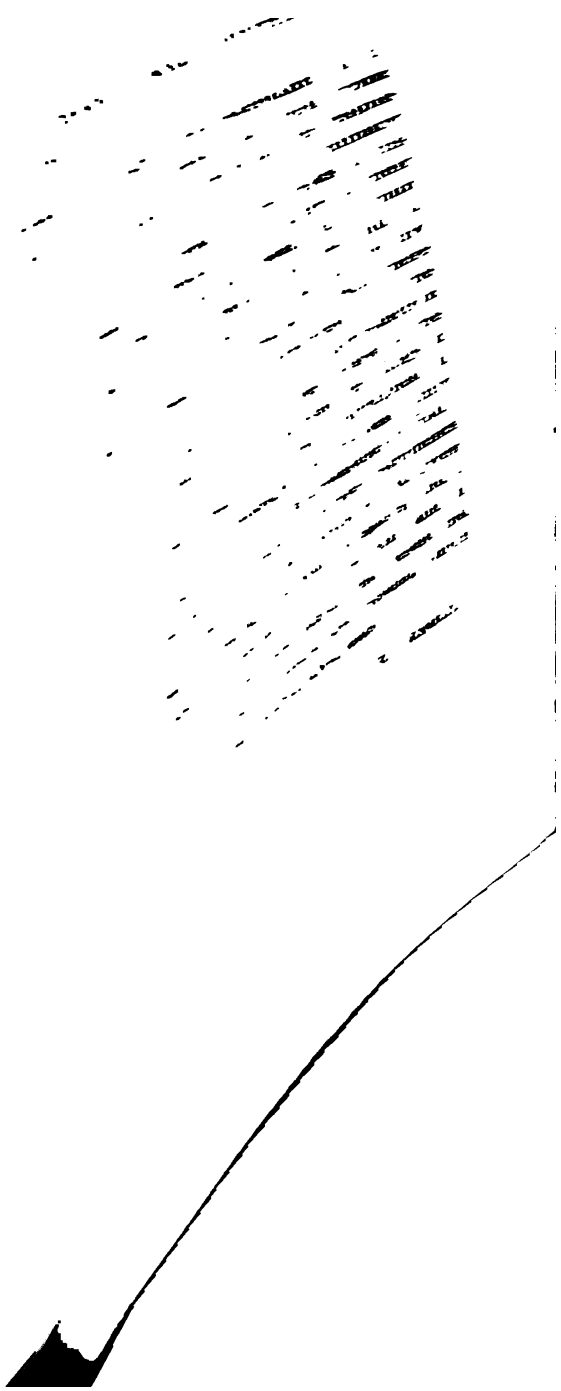
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BOOK I.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS OF THE
LABOUR MOVEMENT.

HISTORICAL.



CHAPTER I.

THE GREAT DOCK STRIKE.

No attempt to deal with the industrial history of England during the last two years would be adequate or satisfactory without reference to the Dock Strike of 1889, and this for two reasons : first, because that strike was the fruitful cause of the industrial disturbances from which we have since suffered, are still suffering, and are yet likely to suffer more ; and secondly, because it showed that the conditions which prevail in modern Democracies are favourable to the development of men and of movements which are hostile to that moral freedom which is the glory alike of the individual and of the State, and also to that material prosperity which is essential to the moral health and progress of the nation, and which is founded upon, and guaranteed by, the fundamental right of individual liberty.

It is not practicable, however, within the limits of a work like this, to treat of the Dock Strike in detail. That strike, commonly spoken of as "The Great Strike," was the most gigantic and disastrous conflict between Capital and Labour which this century has witnessed in England. Yet it commenced in so obscure and unostentatious a fashion that nobody outside the ranks of those immediately interested heard anything of it until several days afterwards, when the mischief was virtually done.

The Dock Strike was the direct result of the Socialistic teaching with which the East End had been deluged, and the men who figured most prominently in it were the self-same men who had been imprisoned some months previously for violent and seditious conduct in Trafalgar Square. For proof of this we have only to turn to the words of Mr. John Burns himself, who says : "It is now some six years since John Williams, myself, and others, commenced our crusade among the dockers. A crusade of the dawn, I may call it ; for we did our haranguing amongst the men

in the hours of the morning before their work and ours had commenced. I myself, with my wife, have frequently left home at three and four o'clock in the morning, winter and summer; tramped to the docks, made speeches at three different gates, and returned to begin my day's work in the West End at seven or eight o'clock. I have done this for weeks and months together. I was doing it at intervals during the years 1884, 1885, and 1886. . . . I was actively concerned in the spreading movements of the unemployed throughout the whole of the East End of London. Working thirteen hours a day for my own bread and cheese, I made time to do something as a Socialist propagandist, and formed, or helped to form, several new trades unions in various parts of London. The last and most important of these was the Gas Stokers' Trades Union. . . . Many of the meetings of the Gas Stokers' Union were held in the East End, in the neighbourhood of the docks. The dockers came in numbers, and Mr. Mann, Mr. Champion, and myself addressed thousands of them. They caught the spirit that we were trying to inform them with, and when the gas workers had won their victory, the dockers in their turn became restless. It was that victory, in a word, that induced the strike of the dockers." Mr. Burns describes himself as "an apostle of discontent," and he says further: "We who were thus openly agitating and *spreading discontent* in this neglected corner of the world of Labour, learned thoroughly the whole condition, economic and social, of the various classes of dock labourers; saw how wretched it was, and deliberately set our ourselves to make the men revolt against their lot." Describing his intervention in the Dock Strike on the day after it had commenced, he says: "Discontent was simmering. I spoke to the men and found them eager and receptive. *The end we had been striving after was coming into view.* . . . On Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, August 15th, 16th, and 17th, I spoke thirty-six times outside of wharves, docks, and warehouses. Mr. Mann, Mr. Tillett, and Mr. Champion did as much. *We put the match to every corner of the building—sitting on walls, or standing astride of palings.*" Finally Mr. Burns says: "As a Socialist, I rejoice that organised labour has shown how fully it can meet the forces of capitalism, and

how small a chance the oppression of labour has against the resolute combination of men who, having found their ideal, are determined to realise it."

This is quite conclusive as to the Socialistic origin and nature of the Dock Strike, and it proves that Mr. Norwood's statement that the strike owed its origin to the deliberations of a Socialistic Congress in Switzerland was not so very far wide of the truth. Socialistic it certainly was, and its Socialism was of the Continental type—violent, infatuated, and desperate. The Gas Workers' Union, referred to by Burns, the "Tea Operatives and General Workers' Union," formed in 1886, and the Dock Labourers' Union, which sprang out of this, were all Socialistic organisations, having scarcely a point in common with Trade Unions of the ordinary type. From these facts it will be perceived that a vigorous propaganda of a Socialistic character, perilous to the interests of the community, had been openly and vigorously carried on in the East End of London for years; nevertheless, statesmen, police authorities, and commercial men were all taken by surprise when the natural fruit of this propaganda manifested itself in the fierce attack upon property and liberty which culminated in, and was exemplified by, the Dock Strike.

On the 19th the strike extended to all the docks, and there were the usual meetings and processions. So it went on day after day for a full month.

It soon became evident that the strike was not so much an attempt on the part of the dockers to secure a reasonable remedy for actual grievances as an attack upon capitalists as a class, which of course was not at all surprising to those who knew the true "inwardness" of its origin. Bitter and malignant attacks were made upon the Dock Directors, who were denounced in the most coarse and brutal language, although they were guilty of no crime but that of paying the men whom they employed the fair market rate of wages. The utterances of the strike leaders, and indeed the whole spirit which underlay the conduct of the strike, were almost as antagonistic to capitalists in general as they were to the directors of the docks, and there was scarcely any attempt to conceal or disguise this Socialistic temper. Yet singularly enough capitalists and employers who were not

directly interested in the strike were so incapable of understanding the broad issues which were involved that many of them actually supported the demagogues who were endeavouring to establish a state of things which would have deprived every capitalist in the land of his property. The ultimate victory of the dock labourers, which has inflicted such serious injury upon the commerce of the nation and entailed the loss of millions upon British capitalists themselves, was largely due to the action of the short-sighted and foolish members of their own class who supported this strike.

Even with the support which it derived from illegal practices, the strike would soon have been ended if the Home Office and the police had done their duty, which was to protect the liberties of workmen who desired to follow their employment and who had no quarrel with their employers, and the rights of capitalists whose property was placed in peril by the action of violent mobs, who for days held the larger portion of the East End of London at their mercy. This duty, the primary duty of a Government, was almost entirely neglected, and the employers and merchants and workmen of London found that, although they were living in a city supposed to be the most enlightened and civilised in the world, they might almost as well, as regards the sacredness of their liberty and the security of their property, have been living in the centre of heathendom. Indeed, the latter would in some respects have been the preferable case; for, in a barbarous country, men take effective measures for defending their freedom and possessions by their own efforts. But in a civilised country these police duties are relegated to the civil Government, and if a Government in a civilised country declines to fulfil its obligations towards the citizens of that country those citizens are placed in a position which is actually worse than that of barbarians; and to this position during the Dock Strike tens of thousands of men were reduced in the City of London, simply because the British Government, as represented by the Home Office, failed to fulfil its most fundamental duties. No greater ill can befall a nation than that its Government should on grounds of mere expediency decline to fulfil the cardinal and fundamental duties which

it owes to the community. It is to be hoped for the honour as well as for the prosperity of England that we shall never again witness the pitiable and painful spectacle of an Executive Government giving licence to mobs of strikers because they possess votes.

With all the advantages which the strikers possessed in being allowed their own lawless way by the Government, in possessing the support of many foolish and unthinking persons of wealth, and in being favoured by almost continuous fine weather, it could never have succeeded had not large amounts of money been sent from Australia. This money, as is now known, was sent under an entire misconception of the real facts of the case, a misconception for which the Press of Australia (or rather its correspondents in London) was almost entirely responsible. A large portion of this money was actually sent by capitalists, who intended it to be used merely for relieving distress in East London, and not as a weapon to fight their brother capitalists with in Great Britain. So far as the Australian funds were contributed by Australian working-men, they were due quite as much to their selfish desire to keep English labour out of the Australian labour market as to sympathy with the "down-trodden" dockers of London.

If the reader will carefully peruse and thoughtfully consider the events which occurred during the Dock Strike, they will probably suggest to his mind some very serious reflections. The gravity, the significance, and the far-reaching effects of this Strike have not yet been adequately realised, either by the rulers and leaders of the nation or by the nation itself. Perhaps the most obvious suggestion conveyed to the mind of the intelligent observer by the events which occurred in connection with that Strike is that the industrial atmosphere has been permeated by perverted or inverted ideas as to the rights of property. It was assumed by the dock labourers that they had in some mystic fashion acquired a share of proprietorship in the docks, and that, consequently, they had some right to say how the property belonging to the dock companies should be used. Of course this assumption had not the slightest foundation in fact. These men really attempted to appropriate the property of their employers, to which they had not one jot or tittle of

right. The origin of this strike, and of a good many others also, is to be found in this perverted idea with regard to the ownership of property. Masses of working-men have become inflated with a sense of their own importance since they have obtained the franchise, and have become the idols of time-serving politicians. These politicians, with their allies in the Press, puffed up the working-man and encouraged him in the belief that he was part owner of any industrial undertaking to which he condescended to sell his labour. The natural result is that the workman has come to entertain an exaggerated sense of his own work and worth in the community. He has persuaded himself, and seeks to persuade others, that he alone creates or produces anything; that, consequently, he alone has the right to appropriate or enjoy anything; and that, as a further consequence, he has the right to deprive everybody else in the community of what they may possess. He is apparently incapable of conceiving the idea that, however valuable may be his work to society, it is work which exists, which can exist, only as the result of the wealth and enterprise and labour of other people. It suits him to shut his eyes to the palpable fact that it is only by the employment of the capital and the energy of employers that any work can be provided for him to do. It is, however, a little surprising that not merely the general public, but that men who claim to be the leaders of the public, men of education and position, should ignore these vital factors in the problem; and it can be accounted for only on the supposition that they are so blinded, either by self-interest or by love of popularity, that they have come to regard it as the highest manifestation of intelligence to accept whatever may be decreed by the Infallible People. Our commerce, our shipping, our docks, our factories, our mines, our railways, and indeed our whole civilisation, are the aggregate result of the exertions of the men who lived before us and who have had the skill and intelligence to devise, and the energy and the money to carry out, these great undertakings. The real constructors of our nation have belonged to the very classes who are now so loftily despised by the people who owe everything to them—the classes who have brains and money, and who for that very reason are able to find employment for the lower order of workers.

Capital and Labour, properly understood, are not antagonistic, since they are both the same thing, viz., labour, under different forms and in varying degrees of development. The capitalist and the labourer, so far from being rivals and opponents, are in reality fellow-helpers who co-operate in the same good work, viz., the production and distribution of the commodities which society needs for its sustenance or its comfort. How, then, can they be antagonists, seeing that both are labourers and both capitalists? The money of the employer, which is the accumulated result of Labour, is his capital, and his management of it in his business or estate is his labour; while the skill and strength of the workman, which are the combined results of heredity, tradition, environment, and personal acquisition, form his capital, and his daily use of that skill and strength constitutes his labour. Both these factors, Capital and Labour, are used in co-operation to produce a common result, which result, as it could not be produced by either one independently of the other, so when it is produced belongs to neither one in any such sense as to exclude the other, but to both alike. Labour, however, as its needs are more urgent and immediate, receives its share of the result *at once*, while the share of Capital is allowed to accumulate; and, as the contribution of Labour is proportionately much less than that of Capital, its drawings from the common proceeds should of course be less in the same proportion. The labourer who draws his wages weekly receives, provided his wages be fair, his share of the product down; receives it just as actually as the capitalist receives his when he sells his goods; and, what is more, the labourer's share has to be advanced by the capitalist until such time as the latter can turn his goods into money—after a period of weeks, or even months or years.

The workman, however, because he draws his share weekly, and sees the share of the capitalist remaining in the business and growing, is very apt to get the idea that he does not receive a fair share of the value of the commodities which he has helped to produce. But this idea usually arises, first, from his shortsightedness in failing to discern that he really gets his share as he goes along; and, secondly, from an exaggerated and fallacious estimate of

the importance of his own work. He helps to produce, but after all he only helps; whereas he is liable to flatter himself that he is the actual and only producer, the skill and energy and money of the employer counting for nothing in his view of the case. Capital is said, and rightly said, to be the accumulated result of Labour. But of what labour? Of whose labour? Here is a palace worth half a million of money. Upon this edifice the first labour expended was that of the architect, who, although he sat in his office and wore a black coat all the time, and used compass and pencil instead of trowel and hod—his brains instead of his muscles—was the real designer and builder of the house. His mathematical and geometrical calculations, his choice of the foundation and style, his arrangements and specifications for its soundness and safety and comfort, his estimates of the cost—all this constituted the real building of the house. It was erected in his mind, subjectively and essentially, before any of the other workers so much as touched a spade or a pick, or even knew that the building was projected. Those who came afterwards and gave the house an objective and accidental manifestation merely followed and built over the lines which had been created by and in the architect's mind, just as a scholar imitates the copy set him by his master. Is it to be said that the architect's labour is not an essential part of the capital sum represented by the value of the completed house?

Strictly speaking, however, even the architect was not the first labourer. Before he could do his work the owner of the house, his employer, had to do a prior work. In the first place he had to find the money to pay for the house (a part of the transaction which can scarcely be regarded as non-essential even by Radical Socialists). That money was the result of Labour, either of its owner's labour or of the labour of those who went before him. Not only had he to find the money, but he had to do a great deal of actual work as well. He had to think and plan before the architect could think and plan. After all this, as the third step in the process of building the house, come the manual workers, the men who digged the foundations, mixed the mortar, carried the bricks, did the bricklaying, the joinery, the plastering, the decorating, who, in short, fulfil the architect's design. Is it to be

tolerated that manual labourers, who could never have been employed on the work at all but for the owner's money and the architect's skill, and *who received their full share of the result while they were doing the work*, should turn round when the house is finished and say that its value represents their labour alone, and that they have a right to it? Emphatically not. Yet this, and nothing else or less, is what working-men are now said to be entitled to. If this preposterous claim could be enforced (conceded it can never be) the result would be that no houses would ever be built, since no man would ever be such a simpleton as to lay out his money only to be robbed of it by those whom he had employed. The Capital represented in the house is the result of Labour truly—but of what labour and whose? Firstly, of those who earned the money with which the house was paid for; secondly, the labour of the architect who designed it; and only, in the third and last place, the labour of those who do the rougher and coarser work of putting it together, who were paid for their labour at the time. Both the architect and the manual workmen received their share of the value of the house in the shape of payment for their labour, and consequently they have no further claim whatever upon the Capital represented by that house, which now belongs absolutely to the man who proposed and paid for its erection.

The same process of reasoning may be applied to any other architectural or engineering work—to the Forth Bridge, for example, or to the Manchester Ship Canal, to a railway or to a steamship; while it applies even more forcibly to a merchant's business or to a great industrial concern. It is equally true of the London Docks, of which we have lately heard so much. These docks were constructed by the expenditure of millions upon millions of money, which represented the labour of hundreds of thousands of hard-working people, many of whom lived before either this generation or the one that preceded it. Before they could be built, even when the money was at hand, it was necessary that skilled engineers, men who had technical knowledge of ships and shipping, and of that peculiar kind of building, should devote their ability, acquired by years of expensive education, to making plans, estimates, and calculations. The Docks, like

everything else, had to be built subjectively before they could be built objectively. Even after they were built and fully equipped for work, the Dock labourers could have made no use of them without the capitalists, the shipowners, and the skilled managers. Millions of capital—aye, hundreds of millions—which has been put into ships and estates and business enterprises all over the world, which Capital is the accumulated result of the Labour of farmers, cattle-breeders, sugar producers, shipbuilders, and traders of all kinds, had to be employed in order to provide the labour by which the dockers subsist. Yet these latter, who represent no money or skill, but simply the coarsest and crudest forms of manual labour, have taken to putting on airs, and have become so inflated with the sense of their own importance, that they talk as if the Capital represented by the Docks in some subtle fashion actually belonged to them.

This notion, that the result of Labour stored up in Capital belongs to the manual worker alone, is one of the most pestilent economic heresies of our time. It arises, in the main, from a total misconception as to the nature of the laws which govern value. Working men have persuaded themselves, and apparently some other people as well, that it is their labour, and that alone, which confers value on what they produce. Nothing could be further from the truth. However much labour may have been spent upon a commodity, it acquires no value unless and until what Adam Smith calls an "effectual demand" arises for it. When a commodity is in demand it is valuable; when it is not in demand it is practically worthless, although as much labour may have been spent upon it in the latter case as in the former.

The Dock Strike was due mainly to the idea, which for years has been instilled into the minds of the labourers, that the workmen have not received their rightful share of the profits and that their employers have been robbing them. (And most of the subsequent strikes have been due to the same notion.) Now, most of these Dock labourers were casual and irregular workers; many of them were wastrels and ne'er-do-wells; very few of them had been employed at the docks for five successive years. What share could such men possess in the business, the goodwill, the profits of the

docks? What had they done to establish that business? Will the Bishop of London, or Sir James Whitehead, or Mr. Sydney Buxton enlighten us on these points? The London Docks, whatever injustices and abuses may have prevailed in connection with them, have been, on the whole and in the main, a boon to the out-of-works in the East-end. In the wages which these men have received out of a concern which they did nothing to establish they have had their full share of its returns. "Public opinion," however, or the hysterical clamour which nowadays too often passes for it, thought differently, and so, in order to gratify the whims of irresponsible people, who have no money in the Docks (or anywhere else, most of them), the shareholders, according to Mr. Norwood's statement, were mulcted to the extent of 150,000*l.* a year to inflate the wages of one class of men above the market rate. The strike owed its vitality entirely to the unintelligent and irrational sympathy which it received from people who knew nothing of the merits of the case. The Dock Committee pointed out that they were paying their men just double the wages received by agricultural labourers, who received 2½*d.*, per hour, or from 14*s.* to 16*s.* a week, their hours being twelve per day. This is a tolerably high estimate for farm labourers, many of whom do not get 12*s.* a week. Where is the injustice of paying the dock labourer double the wage of an agricultural labourer—the latter being really a skilled workman?

During the week ending Aug. 17, 1889, there were forty-seven gangs of men working at the Millwall Dock. The most earned by any one gang of six men was 18*l.* 19*s.* 8*d.* for the week of sixty hours, 3*l.* 3*s.* 3*d.* *per man*; the least earned by any one gang was 10*l.* 17*s.* 7*d.* or 1*l.* 16*s.* 6*d.* a man for a week of sixty-two hours. Where, again, is the injustice? Yet the men at the Millwall Docks went out on strike! The lightermen were so unjustly treated that they could earn only from 50*s.* to 60*s.* per week. So they also struck! In face of facts like these the dunderheaded "public" thought the dockers and other riverside workers so harshly treated that they subscribed some 40,000*l.* for the purpose of compelling the Dock Directors to disgorge their ill-gotten gains! These Directors were really trustees for some 5000 shareholders, many of them widows

and orphans of limited means, who had received little or no return for their money. What did that matter to "the public"? There is nothing so unreasoning as the public; nothing so pitiless and cruel and unjust; it is continually committing two injustices in the attempt to remedy one.

The ideas which have been disseminated among the working classes by industrial agitators with regard to the liberty of the individual workman are as perverted in their nature and as vicious in their effects as the ideas with regard to property which we have just considered. It has been proclaimed from every Labour platform that an individual workman who dared to act upon his own judgment and in his own interests, and to oppose the general body of his fellows, was a coward and a traitor. The idea that a working man should be free to act according to his own lights and his own conscience, is denounced as a doctrine of devils by the very men who prate most loudly of liberty. The Trade Union notion of liberty is, that the individual workman should efface himself by giving himself over body and soul into the hands of some autocrat or some committee whose orders he is to obey as unquestioningly as a slave obeys his owner, however unreasonable or preposterous those orders may be. If he acts this part of a slave, acts as a being who possesses no rational or moral powers, who is incapable of perceiving and judging for himself what is right and wrong, or of acting upon his own convictions of duty, he is said to be manifesting the highest dignity of manhood; but if he has the courage to act as a truly rational and moral being alone can act, that is, to reason out all matters for himself and to do what he himself believes to be right without regard to the smile or frown of any other being in the universe except his God, he is called in mockery and contempt an ignoble exemplar of unmanliness. For such a man no insult is too vile, no abuse too foul; assault and maltreatment are regarded as his just deserts; and those who lay violent hands upon him think that they are doing humanity service. Even the murder of such a man would be esteemed as no crime in the eyes of thousands of men whose moral judgments on other matters are fairly sound. For confirmation of this, one only need to study carefully the words which were used and the deeds which were committed during the Dock Strike

towards men whose only offence was that they dared to set at naught the laws of self-constituted industrial lawgivers. These men were assailed in the most scurrilous and violent language, and many of them were in imminent danger of being maimed and murdered, and this at the hands of men who professed to be true lovers of freedom and exalted ensamples of morality.

What is called the "New Unionism" may be said to have been brought to the birth during the throes of the struggle at the Docks. For legitimate Trades Unionism it is perhaps possible that a plausible defence could be made by its advocates; but for this bastard Trades Unionism nobody can make out a good case. It meets no real need on the part of the working classes; it performs no useful functions in society; it is utterly alien to the spirit of the English people and to the spirit of their institutions. It is a monstrous excrescence upon the fair face of the community, a rank and poisonous fungus growing upon the trunk of civilisation.

We may now ask what the real results of the strike have been, and what good it has really accomplished. For some little time after it was settled the Dock labourers were, of course, jubilant, but as the months went on their tone changed to one of the deepest depression, and this depression has continued ever since. The settlement came to at the strike proved to be no settlement at all, but an unsettling of everything. From that time until now "trouble at the docks" has been intermittent, and disputes and strikes of constant occurrence, and most of these strikes have been of a perfectly wanton and unjustifiable description. At one time the men struck because they wished to be paid for meal times, in flagrant violation of the terms of their agreement with the masters; at another time they struck in order to force clerks and foremen into the Dockers' Union. In short these disturbances became so constant as to be virtually chronic, the result being that employers could never rely with certainty upon getting their work done, and the natural consequence of this was that they took their work elsewhere.

Looking at the Dock labourers themselves, it is impossible for any candid and well-informed person to say that they have gained anything by the strike. Scarcely, indeed, was the strike over before the process of disillusionment com-

menced. The *Pall Mall Gazette*, which frantically supported the strikers and excelled most of its contemporaries in its bombastic eulogies of the dockers and their leaders, found out on the day that the strike ended that "the lot of the casual labourer at the East End does not promise to be a very happy one in the coming winter." It was perceived that the re-organisation of labour by the Dock companies on a permanent basis would lead to the selection only of the fittest and strongest men, while the weaker and more incompetent casuals would be thrown to the wall. "Hence," sorrowfully remarked the *Pall Mall*, "whatever advantages the strike has secured for the men, it is obvious that it has not solved the whole labour problem of the East End."

Even the permanent labourers have not been benefited, for there are fewer of them required in the Docks than ever before, simply because London has lost much of its trade; and in addition to this the Dockers' Union issued its edict that no man should be permitted to work in the Docks unless his name was on the Union books. Not only this, but when the Dockers' Union had secured a certain number of members, it closed its books against all new comers. The Union therefore said to a man who wished to work in the Docks: "You will not be allowed to work in the Docks unless your name is on our books, and we shall not place your name on our books because our members are already sufficient to do all the work that there is to be done." This is Protection in its most vicious form, and yet the men who combine to protect themselves in this way are in other respects the most ardent of Free Traders. During the winter of 1891, 8000 members of the Dockers' Union, after they had resorted to all these dodges to keep the work in their own hands, were out of employment, while 3000 more were employed only on half time. It is very clear, therefore, that neither the casual labourers nor the permanent labourers have gained any real benefit from striking, but rather the opposite, although the strike is believed to have cost one way and another no less than two millions sterling.

The only persons who have benefited from the Dock Strike are "Messrs. Burns, Tillet, Mann, Champion & Co., Limited, Agitators," who exploited labour in a new fashion

for their own ends. As for the ignorant and credulous fellows who allowed themselves to be duped by these astute gentlemen, they are, we repeat, worse off than ever. The strike took place in August, 1889. Before the winter of that year had fairly begun thousands of these deluded men, who had built such great hopes upon "the higher industrialism," were cruelly disillusioned, and realised that their misery had been rendered more abysmal and hopeless than before. The lot of the casual labourer, hard enough previously, is now desperate and intolerable, simply because his "brethren" of the Dockers' Union have made it impossible for him to earn a shilling, or to get a crust of bread. During the winter of 1891 the state of things among the dockers was worse than it was during the winter of 1890. Their Union, which started with such a fanfaronade of trumpets, and which was to do such wonderful and glorious things, found itself with 9000 unemployed members on its hands, the said members being ready to devour their "leaders," while Mr. Tom Mann, the chairman of the Union, endeavoured to conciliate the infuriated victims by talking about "municipal workshops." Processions and agitations of the "unemployed" were again resorted to, an extension of out-door relief was clamorously demanded from the Government, and private charity once more busied itself in offering premiums to loafers who will never work while they can drink, and who will drink as long as "philanthropy" continues to supply them with better wages for doing nothing than they could earn by honest industry.

Notwithstanding the fact that 9000 members of the Dockers' Union were out of work, and that in the midst of one of the most bitter winters of the century, the unemployed showed no disposition (as usual) to accept work even when it was offered to them. Why? Because they relied upon charity coming to their help. The men at the Victoria Docks threw up their work at the beginning of the year (1891) because the employers refused to pay them for the dinner hour; in other words, because they were not allowed to take out of their employers' pockets money for which they rendered no equivalent. What is this but an attempt at robbery by coercion? This was too much even

for Tom Mann and Ben Tillett, who ostentatiously condemned the "irresponsible individuals" and "mischief makers" who caused the strike. But the fact that a body of men, who were paid the wages which they had bargained for, could strike in such a way at such a time shows how far the work of deterioration has gone.

Mr. W. Beckett Hill, who was a sympathiser with the men during the Dock Strike, wrote to the *Times* on January 3, 1891, in the following terms: "Speaking from my own knowledge, the Victoria and Royal Albert Docks were seldom fuller of ships; and there never has been a time during the last fortnight that we have been able to get sufficient labour either for loading or discharging, *to say nothing of getting a fair day's work from the labourer when he does choose to work.* The *Richmond Hill* arrived on December 21, and is not yet discharged. *Thirteen days have not yet completed an operation which in Liverpool, Glasgow, New York, or Montreal would take three days.* . . . Every day there are strikes and stoppages on some ridiculous pretext or other. On Thursday they struck all day because the Dock Company would not pay them for meal hours—a stipulation which was made by the Dock Company, and actually agreed to by the men's representatives after the long successful last year's strike, and now, in this period of so-called distress, it forms an excuse for not working. Yesterday and to-day the corn-men, who can easily make 12s. 6d. per day in the discharge of grain at the ordinary rates, have struck for an advance of 50 per cent., which would bring their earnings up to nearly one pound per day; the evident aim of the labourer being to get enormous wages on one day, that he may dispense with work during the rest of the week, *having enough for his own public-house enjoyments, and leaving his family to be supported by charity.* In such a state of affairs it is not surprising that discipline and subordination are completely absent. The foremen have lost all control over the labourers. . . . The sooner a general lock-out and a stoppage of the demoralising charitable supplies takes place, the sooner London shipping business will be put more on a level with other ports in economy and despatch." About the same time a correspondent of the *Standard* stated that men were required to

stow material from the ship-side into a barge. With great difficulty two or three men were obtained at 10d. per hour. The next day an offer of 1s. per hour failed to induce anybody to work, every man holding out for 1s. 6d. per hour, while some declined to move under 2s. 6d. Eventually the work had to be done by men from a distant part of London. After this it is not surprising to learn that the Paddington Vestry failed to get men to clear the snow from the streets at fourpence an hour. Three hundred men a day were required, but never more than 140 could be got, and one day only a beggarly four-and-twenty turned up. This was the state of things which prevailed during bitter wintry weather, and when outcries about the "distress" were heard on every hand. Why should these men work when they and their families can be supported in idleness and luxury by the "charity" of people who have got more money than brains? The East End has been turned into a loafer's paradise, and the trade of the port of London is being ruined by the cranky people who have got slums on the brain. It is a pity that society cannot devise some means by which the hysterical old women (of both sexes) who supported and prolonged this Dock Strike could be made to bear the additional expense which it has caused by augmenting and aggravating distress in the East End. But this, alas! is impossible. That patient beast of burden, the taxpayer, the hard-working and honest and quiet citizen, will have to do what he usually does—pay for the follies of faddists and agitation-mongers.

A good deal was heard at one time about a grand co-operative scheme which the Dockers were going to inaugurate. The middleman was to be eliminated entirely, and the portion of profits which he formerly pocketed was to go direct into the pockets of the men. The scheme has been tried, and although the Directors of the Docks and the ship-owners gave it all the assistance in their power, it has virtually failed. Mr. Tillett has admitted this in his evidence before the Labour Commission.

The net result of all this is, that the Dock labourer is thoroughly convinced that he has been cruelly deceived, and not unnaturally he is disposed to turn fiercely upon the leaders who have deluded him. It is notorious that those

leaders have had the utmost difficulty in retaining their hold upon the men. In fact, the leaders of the dockers are alarmed at their own handiwork. They see that the crowds of the unemployed are larger than ever, and the only suggestion they have to make with regard to them is that they should all be supported out of the rates.

The main significance of the Dock Strike lies in the fact that it was symptomatic of the Socialistic disease which is eating so deeply into the very vitals of the Commonwealth. It was the first symptom of a really alarming character, but it has been followed by others scarcely less grave. One of the most serious features of the Strike was that it showed, as Mr. Champion boasted, that half a dozen men of his own type could paralyse the trade of the port of London. John Burns boasted at the Poplar Town Hall that he himself would do this if the Dock Directors did not keep faith with their men. Mr. Burns is, as everybody knows, a blusterer and a braggart; yet even Mr. Burns could accomplish this feat if he were supported blindly by the Dock labourers, and those who stood with them through this strike, and if the police authorities and the Government were to wink at picketing and intimidation as they did during the month of August, 1889. What is more, Mr. Burns and his coadjutors will not hesitate to paralyse the trade of London if they see that this step is needful to gratify their ambitions, and to secure their ulterior purposes.

It is certainly a singular anomaly that a few thousand labourers, ignorant and unskilled, should hold at their mercy the commerce and the prosperity of the earth's commercial capital, the largest and wealthiest city in the world, and should stand between the nation's prosperity and its ruin. Really, if this is what the most perfect Government in the world brings us to, we cannot lose much by at once exchanging such Government for anarchy. If the Executive Government would abdicate its functions in a straightforward manner, people who own property and who cherish their liberty would know what they had to do, and would take effective steps for defending what they hold to be precious. At present, however, this function of defending the freedom and the possessions of the citizens is supposed to belong to the Government.

During the progress of the strike, Mr. Norwood stated its object in these terms: "The strike is a blow aimed at Capital. It has gone far beyond the category of a mere dockers' strike, and has developed into an organised attack upon Capital and an outburst with a view of raising the rate of remuneration for employment over the entire East of London." For a time it seemed as if this object would really be accomplished, and there can be no doubt that, but for the vigorous action of the employers in forming the Shipping Federation, the mischief done by the strike would have been much more serious than it was.

Viewed broadly, the Dock strike is seen to be unique in its kind. Nothing like it was ever seen before; nothing like it will ever be seen again. It was an experiment which can never be repeated. Never again will circumstances all combine to favour such an uprising of disaffected working-men. Such uprisings there may of course be, and perhaps on almost as large a scale, but when working-men do rise in this way they will find the capitalists better prepared to meet them; they will find the Government less complacent; and most important, perhaps, of all, they will find that there will be no foreign subsidies either from Australia or from anywhere else. We may continue to hear the "high falutin" which is in vogue among labour agitators as to the international character of labour movements, the solidarity of Labour throughout the world, and the universal determination of working-men to strangle the hated capitalist; but all this will end largely in smoke, and the working-men of one nation will never subscribe thousands of pounds to assist the working-men of another nation even to emancipate themselves from the "slavery of wagedom."

A general review of the Dock Strike suggests very forcibly three lessons. The first is, that political power, used by a democratic majority for its own selfish ends, may prove an instrument for the destruction of civilisation itself. It is conceivable that a majority under a Democracy might, by confiscatory laws, deprive every landowner or capitalist of his property; but it is not conceivable that a State in which this had been done could continue to exist as a civilised nation. It must inevitably fall back into barbarism and anarchy.

The second lesson is, that emotional philanthropy, unguided by reason and unrestrained by prudence, may prove a danger to the State second only to the cupidity of a democratic majority. As much mischief was done during the Dock Strike by mistaken kindness as by wanton violation of economic and of civil law.

The third lesson is, that those citizens who possess property and wish to keep it, who have liberty and desire to exercise it, will have to arm themselves in their own defence. More and more they must trust in their own right hand, and less and less in the protection of the Government. Under a wise and sound Constitution it may be prudent to rely upon the Government fulfilling its primary obligations towards the community in general; but it is clear that under a Democratic Constitution, where the rulers are the mere creatures of the popular vote, it will not do to place too much reliance upon the Government discharging its executive duties and its administrative responsibilities. In this respect we in England are under a grave disability as compared with the people of the United States. Their written Constitution, their Supreme Court, and the independence of their Executive, both of the popular vote and of Parliament, during their term of office, give them advantages which we do not possess, and afford guarantees as to the security of property, the continuity of national policy, and the stability of national institutions, which it is becoming more and more difficult to secure in Great Britain, where, with the existence of Household Suffrage, and an Executive dependent from day to day upon the popular will, a gust of political passion, even of political madness, may sweep the Government from office without a day's warning.

CHAPTER II.

MISCELLANEOUS STRIKES.

THE Dock Strike, bringing forth fruit after its kind, soon proved itself a prolific mother of industrial mischiefs. The spirit of which the Dock Strike was but one manifestation soon spread to nearly every branch of labour throughout the land. Time would fail to tell of the numerous and various strikes which occurred during the two years succeeding the Dock Strike, and which may be more or less distinctly traced to the Socialistic-Labour movement which has dignified itself with the title of the New Unionism. It is computed that over 2000 strikes occurred in the year 1889 alone, and probably as many occurred during the succeeding year. It is obvious, therefore, that the task of enumerating all these trade disputes, and dealing with them according to their merits or demerits, is practically an impossibility.

Within the limits of this chapter it will be possible to glance only at a few of the principal strikes which followed upon the heels of the Dock Strike, and of even these few only the broader aspects can be noticed.

Taking these miscellaneous strikes in the order of their importance, undoubtedly the first place must be given to the strike of gas-stokers at the South Metropolitan Gas Company's works. The origin of this strike was singular. The Directors of the Company offered to give their men an interest in the business under a co-operative plan of profit-sharing, the aim of which was of course to attach the men to the concern by a stronger bond than that which is provided by a mere weekly wage, and thus to avert strikes in the future. This proposal of the Company was denounced with great indignation by Trade Unionists as an attempt to rob the men of their rights of combination, and on this ground it was bitterly opposed by the Union Bosses, who saw that the policy of the Directors would be fatal, if not to Trade

Unions themselves, at all events to the facility with which they have hitherto been used to create industrial conflicts. Hence the strike.

In Mr. George Livesey, the energetic Chairman of the South Metropolitan Gas Company, the strikers met a foeman worthy of their steel. He quickly proved himself to be a man of determined will and of infinite resource. When attacked by the strikers he met blow with blow, never yielding an inch of ground, holding his own with a vigour and tenacity which made Englishmen everywhere feel that the spirit of their forefathers had not quite died out after all. By dint of almost superhuman efforts Mr. Livesey kept the gas-works going and supplied the consumers with what had become to them a necessary of life, although for part of the time the gas supplied was to some extent inferior in quality and deficient in quantity. The places of the strikers were promptly filled up, so that when the strike ended in a complete victory for Mr. Livesey the men who had been foolish enough to give up profitable employment under excellent masters at the bidding of Trade Union agitators found themselves left out in the cold without employment. Many of them, according to all accounts, have never had any work since.

The financial interests involved were of great magnitude, as may be judged from the fact that the struggle cost the gas company nearly 70,000*l.* At the half-yearly meeting on Feb. 18, 1891, the report showed that there had been a deficiency of over 50,000*l.*, and that the Reserve Fund had been heavily drawn upon to meet the expenses of the strike. There had been an advance in wages of 15,000*l.* as compared with the corresponding half-year two years previously. The men had not only given up "the sacred right to strike," but they had also saved since the previous June 2986*l.*, of which they had invested 1657*l.* in the shares of the Company. One consequence of the strike was that, although the price of gas remained about the same, the shareholders had to be content with a smaller dividend.

So resolute was Mr. Livesey in his attitude, and so clearly did he perceive the magnitude of the issues which were involved in the contest, that he declared that he had decided to shut up the works altogether rather than yield to the demands

of the New Unionism. Under the blow thus dealt by Mr. Livesey the New Unionism reeled again. Another such defeat would probably have proved the end of the pretentious organisation which had been called into being by Messrs. Burns, Tillet, and Co., and which for a few brief weeks had strutted proudly across the stage to the terror of the capitalists of the country and of the community in general. Had there been a George Livesey at the head of the Dock Directors the industrial history of England during the past two years would probably have been very different from what it has been.

The second strike in point of importance which occurred during the period under review was that which took place at the Bute Docks, Cardiff, and which was virtually a struggle for supremacy between the Shipping Federation and the National Seamen's Union. The Shipowners' Union had instituted a shipping register where any seaman might, on payment of 1s., enter his name. From this register the Federation's crews were manned. The Seamen's Union, fearing that preference might by these means be given to non-Unionists, entered into an alliance with the Dockers' Union, whereby both Unions agreed to co-operate in boycotting vessels which shipped their crews from the Shipping Federation instead of the Seamen's Union. In accordance with this decision the *Glen Gelder*, an Aberdeen steamship, was blocked, while other vessels were compelled to ship Unionists. The tactics adopted by the labour leaders during this strike were precisely similar to those which they had adopted elsewhere. Their policy was, by combining all the forces of Labour, to concentrate their attack upon the Bute Dock Company, and thus compel them to yield. But they had reckoned without their host. Cardiff is fortunate enough to possess a man who to an almost unrivalled knowledge of the industries of South Wales, adds an amount of ability and fortitude which are seldom excelled, to wit, Sir W. T. Lewis, the Marquis of Bute's agent and manager. This gentleman proved himself to be as formidable and resourceful an antagonist of the New Unionism in Cardiff as Mr. Livesey had been in London. Certain of the tippers employed in the Bute Docks intimated to the foreman that they would not shoot coals into a particular ship, the *Glen Gelder*, any

longer, for the reason that it belonged to the Shipping Federation and was manned by a Federation crew. They requested that the boat should be taken out of the Dock. The Trade Unions also approached Sir W. T. Lewis and asked him to give a guarantee that the men should not be compelled to load ships carrying non-union crews. He emphatically refused to give any such undertaking, and, in consequence, all the men came out on strike. However, there was abundance of free labour in Cardiff, and men who were willing to work were employed, and they were protected by the Borough and the County police forces, who were assisted by a detachment of soldiers. In these circumstances the Dock Company soon had the whole of their cranes working, and the strike, so far as they were concerned, was at an end. Mr. J. H. Wilson, of the Seamen's Union, tried his best to block all the vessels in the port, but with only indifferent success. Owing to the firmness of Sir W. T. Lewis, and the support which was given to him by the shipowners, the strike had never very much heart in it, and it soon simmered out. Thus another deadly blow was struck at the New Unionism, which had, nevertheless, succeeded in throwing one of the most flourishing towns in the country into temporary idleness and disorder, the natural results of which were only prevented from showing themselves, to the great injury of the district, by the firmness with which the agitators and their dupes were met by Sir W. T. Lewis and his supporters. Both employers and workmen in South Wales are heavily indebted to Sir W. T. Lewis, not merely for what he did during the strike which has just been referred to, but still more for the action which he has taken to prevent strikes, and at the same time to ensure to the workmen fair wages, inasmuch as he is the author of the Sliding Scale which is in force in South Wales and Monmouthshire, and which automatically regulates wages in accordance with prices. It may be stated that the Marquis of Bute declared his determination to entirely close the Docks for a period rather than yield to the Trade Unions.

It is significant that the New Unionism put forth all its strength in connection with this strike at Cardiff. All its principal leaders, including Mr. J. H. Wilson, of the Seamen's

Union, Tom Mann, Ben Tillett, and John Burns, were on the spot doing their utmost to rally their forces. In spite of all their exertions, however, they were ignominiously defeated. Their original demand was, as already indicated, that non-unionists should be dismissed; but when they found that they were not going to carry things their own way they soon began to moderate their tone, and ultimately they were glad to present a humble plea that unionists should be placed on the same footing as non-unionists. This was in fact asking for nothing, simply because the Dock Company had all along stated that its wharves were open to unionists and non-unionists alike. There never was a more impudent demand than that which was put forth by the Seamen's and Dockers' Union in connection with this Cardiff strike, namely, that the Dock Company should employ unionists only, and their attempt to enforce this condition upon the Company by a wanton strike, which injured not simply this particular Company but the whole trade of the district, was not only an unsuccessful piece of strategy, but was also a high-handed attempt to coerce employers, which was as unrighteous as it was arbitrary. Towards the end of the strike Sir W. T. Lewis consented to see Tom Mann, merely as a matter of courtesy and not as a representative of any Union, but merely as an individual, Sir William's position being that he recognised no union at all, either of men or masters. He informed Mr. Mann that all the places in the Docks had been filled up, and when Mr. Mann, in singular contrast to his bravado on platforms, entreated Sir William to be merciful because he was strong, he was told that justice came before mercy. Mann, notwithstanding all that had occurred, had the hardihood to suggest to Sir W. T. Lewis that he should discharge the men who had taken the places of the strikers and reinstate the latter. Sir William, to his honour, utterly refused to entertain the suggestion for a moment, and herein his conduct presents a most favourable contrast with that of some other employers, who had been mean enough to discharge the very men by whose assistance they had been able to minimise or neutralise the effects of a strike. In consequence of Sir W. T. Lewis' firm attitude, the strike leaders again began to indulge in tall talk, and declared that they would call out the whole of the workmen,

invite the co-operation of all the Trade Unions, and so on. But it was talk and nothing more. In the end they had to submit to a humiliating defeat with the best grace possible. The strike in Cardiff, like that in South London, ended in the Unions being vanquished and in the victims of the Unions losing their employment, although the leaders of these Unions were not one penny the worse.

The third strike in point of importance which occurred during the period under review was the Dock Strike at Southampton, which was caused solely by the interference and the arrogance of the newly formed Dockers' Union. In Southampton, as in London, the Dock Company and their employés were working amicably together until this Union, for its own purposes, came in between them. When the trouble began the Dock Company consented to increase wages to 6*d.* per hour by day and 7*d.* per hour by night, though at the same time, perceiving what manner of men they had to deal with, they quietly arranged to place their labour on a new and sounder basis by engaging permanent workmen at a guinea per week. This, of course, did not suit the agitators who were fomenting the disturbances. Very soon all the labourers in the port, coal, corn, and general porters, seamen, and firemen, as well as the dockers were out on strike, with the result that the trade of the town was thoroughly paralysed. Pickets were stationed all round the Docks and railways to prevent labourers from being imported. Matters quickly assumed a threatening aspect, and on the very day of the strike reinforcements of police were obtained from London and from the headquarters of the Hampshire County Police, whilst the soldiers in Winchester Barracks were ordered to be kept in readiness should their services be required. An engine, which was about to cross from the station to the Dock, was taken possession of by a crowd of enraged strikers, who seized the engine driver by the throat, threw him into the roadway, and backed the engine into the station again. A riot was anticipated, and the Mayor hastily convened the Watch Committee. An interview was held between these gentlemen and the representatives of the Dockers' Union, at which it was agreed that the mails should have free access to the Docks, and that passengers by American liners should also

pass without molestation, the Mayor stating that no "black-legs" should enter the Dock that night. Surely this was a singular compact to be entered into by the Mayor and Watch Committee of a leading sea-port, especially when it is added that the agreement further specified that "in case of breach of faith, the Dockers' Union were to take *what steps they liked* to prevent workmen from going into the Docks." The spectacle of the responsible magistrates of Southampton parleying with a set of ruffians, whose only followers were a band of discontented and disorderly workmen, and entering into something like an armistice with them, though from one point of view it was nothing better than a ridiculous farce, was nevertheless calculated to cause uneasy reflections as to the course which events were taking. Clearly it was the duty of the Mayor and Watch Committee to repress, promptly and sternly, any outbreak of lawlessness, and at the same time to give proper protection to the respectable workmen of the town who were willing to pursue their callings.

To the credit of the Mayor of Southampton, however, it must be stated that he telegraphed for 250 soldiers on the very day that he allowed himself to palaver with the strikers. The next day the windows of his business establishment were broken, and the crowds in the streets were charged by the soldiers with fixed bayonets, many people being seriously injured. The Mayor's private residence had to be placed under the protection of the military, and additional troops were telegraphed for. Every part of the Docks, and even of the town, was rigorously picketed, nobody being allowed to work, while all kinds of malicious injuries were done to property. And what was it all for? Simply in order that the high-blown pride of a few of the New Unionist agitators might be flattered by the recognition of their Union on the part of the employers. The recognition of the Union was positively the only question in dispute, and the employers, who acted like reasonable and common-sense men, and thus presented a singular contrast to the conduct of the local rulers, steadfastly refused to give to the Union the recognition which it demanded.

The Southampton strike did not last many days, and it ended in a more decisive defeat for the New Unionism than

any that had preceded it. The masters refused to see any of the leaders of the dockers, or to enter into any agreement with them, and in view of this firm attitude the Executive of the Dockers' Union in London quickly found it expedient to repudiate their agents in Southampton, and to declare that the strike had been begun without their authority and against their advice. The workmen were thoroughly well beaten, and the masters, having had the good sense to conduct their business in their own way and to reject the advice and intervention of fussy busy-bodies, were able to resume business with their freedom and power unimpaired. Several of the rioters were sent to prison, and many of the labourers found that their places had been occupied by others, whilst all of them had lost a considerable sum in wages, only to find in the end that they had been befooled. "Paid agitators have sold us," was their cry when they were advised to resume work without having gained by the strike any one of the objects for which it was started. There has been exceedingly little trouble at the Southampton Docks since this strike ended.

The other principal strikes which occurred during the period which we are considering were those which took place at Silvertown, London (where the New Unionism received another smashing blow), the Tailors' Strike in London, the Bakers' Strike in London, the Cabmen's Strike in London, the Carpenters' Strike in London, the Brick-makers' Strike in Kent, the Gas-stokers' Strike in Leeds, the strike at Manningham Mills, Bradford, and the strike at Messrs. Doulton's in Lambeth. Perhaps the most unreasonable of all these strikes was that of the London carpenters, who demanded that their hours of work should be reduced to forty-seven per week, whilst at the same time their wages should be increased to 10*d.* per hour. This is an admirable illustration of the present fanatical temper of working-men. Carpenters are skilled artisans, and not rude labourers like the dockers, and, moreover, their Trade Unionism is of the old and not of the new order. If any class of men in the country might have been expected to exhibit intelligence, reasonableness, and self-control, surely it was the carpenters; yet these men showed such an incapacity to comprehend the issues involved, and so entirely miscalculated their strength

and the power of those against whom it was directed, that they actually went on strike, and remained on strike for nearly six months, in order to enforce upon their employers terms more preposterous than any that have ever been demanded by any body of workmen in this country. The master builders of London, because they declined to practically commit suicide by granting these terms, were struck against, and their businesses brought to a standstill, immense loss being inflicted upon thousands of people. Nevertheless, the Trade Union Congress and the Executive Committees of numerous Trade Unions not only passed resolutions of sympathy with the London carpenters, but also assisted them with funds. No doubt their motives in so acting were selfish, for if carpenters are to work only 47 hours per week, less than eight hours per day, and are to receive 6s. 8d. a day for it, it is certain that all other artisans will soon demand the same terms. It would almost seem that the more extreme and absurd are the terms demanded by any body of strikers the more likely are they to receive support, not merely from the New Unionism, but also from the older Trade Unions as well. The Carpenters' Strike was ultimately settled by a compromise.

The strike at Leeds demands notice, if only for the reason that the conduct of the Leeds Corporation was such as to make it doubtful whether the local authorities of Southampton or those of Leeds showed the greater incapacity and imbecility. The strike arose out of a dispute which occurred between the Gas Committee of the Leeds Corporation and their workmen. The Committee issued notices to their men intimating that they would in future be required to work upon certain conditions, which were duly set forth. The men declined to submit to these conditions, and struck work, both of which things they had a perfect right to do. Other men were engaged to take their places. These new men, however, were not allowed to enter the gasworks in consequence of the violence and intimidation to which they were subjected by the workmen on strike. It was at this point, as is usually the case in these strikes, that the strikers put themselves in the wrong; it is at this point, too, that employers are put to the test, and show either their strength or their weakness. At Leeds the Corporation succeeded only in demonstrating

its utter impotency. Some of the new men who did succeed in entering the gasworks soon threw up their work owing to the terrible threats which were made against them. Serious disturbances occurred in the town, and for more than one night Leeds was left in total darkness. The gasworkers and their sympathisers armed themselves with formidable sticks to which hooks, spikes, and nails were attached, and with these they attacked the police, who vigorously defended themselves with their batons, the result being a very large number of broken heads. The military had to be called out, and violent riots occurred, during which several officers, soldiers, and constables were seriously wounded. Anarchy threatened to reign supreme for the time. These events showed how thoroughly the labourers of Leeds, like those of London, had learned the lessons which had been taught by recent events in Ireland. They also indicated some of the dangers which lurk in the ownership of gas and waterworks by Municipalities. Just now there is a strong demand in certain quarters that works of this class, in London and all our large cities, should be placed under the direct control of the County or Town Councils. Whatever may be said in favour of this course, such events as those which occurred at Leeds show that its dangers are such as to outweigh its advantages. If the Leeds Gas Works had been in the hands of private owners we should not have witnessed such a deplorable spectacle of feebleness and indecision as was presented by the members of the Gas Committee. These gentlemen knew that the strikers were their own constituents, and that they could send them about their business at the next election. No doubt they were honourable men enough, and in any other circumstances would have acted in a manly and dignified spirit, but in the actual circumstances in which they found themselves they acted very much like the American judge, who is elected by the popular vote, and who therefore, with all his love of justice in the abstract, manages so to manipulate matters in his Court as to secure re-election. The Gas Committee at Leeds, after quarrelling with their men, involving the town in riot, and causing a loss to the gasworks of 20,000/., made an abject surrender to the strikers, to whom they yielded practically everything, in addition to which they had the unspeakable meanness to

discharge the free labourers who had come to their help at a dangerous crisis, merely giving them a few pounds by way of compensation. The action of Mr. George Livesey in London, and of these anonymous pigmies in Leeds, marks the difference between the action of a man who is strong and independent and the action of men who are merely creatures of the popular vote.

The strike at Manningham Mills, Bradford, originated with the weavers. But in March, 1891, all the spinners and skeiners struck work in sympathy with the weavers, some 5000 hands thus being idle. On the 4th of April, Mr. Watson, one of the directors, informed the spoolers and skeiners that, unless they decided to return to work, arrangements would have to be made for removing the machinery elsewhere, and consequently the spoolers, to the number of 200, expressed their willingness to return to work. No doubt the remainder of the strikers would have done the same in the course of a short time if they had been left to themselves. On April 12th, however, Ben Tillet and other stormy petrels appeared upon the scene and addressed a meeting in connection with the strike. The authorities had prohibited the holding of this meeting in the Town Hall Square, and in view of a threat to hold it in defiance of this prohibition, 150 police were held in readiness for action. Mr. Councillor Sanders, of Rotherham, followed by crowds of people, made two attempts to hold a meeting in this Square, but the people were dispersed by the police. The next day still further attempts were made to hold meetings in the Square, and the military were in consequence called out. The Riot Act was read, and bayonet charges were made. The Town Hall windows were broken, and considerable damage was done to other property. At one of these meetings a leaflet was circulated headed, "Communists Appeal to Criminals." It was of a most violent character, and was signed "Your Brothers and Comrades in the Social Revolution, the Sheffield Group of Communists and Anarchists." During the riots stones and other missiles, including open knives, were thrown at the police—another indication that the lower class of English working men were not at all indisposed to imitate the tactics which had been so freely resorted to in Ireland.

The dispute which occurred at Doulton's Potteries was in some respects more instructive than any of those which have been noticed, inasmuch as it affords a more flagrant example of the arrogance of Trades Unions, and of the tyranny with which they attempt to enforce their views upon employers. Sir Henry Doulton, being anxious to train up really skilful potters in order that his celebrated ware might be kept up to its high level of excellence, encouraged the training of boys in the art of "throwing" on the potter's wheel, an art which can only be learned proficiently by those who begin it in early life. With this object in view, he secured indentured apprentices as required, and also introduced a modification of the system of apprenticeship by substituting the payment of a bonus for legal compulsion, such bonus being paid to each youth who completed his term in a commendable manner. These voluntary agreements, made between the lad and his parents on the one hand and the firm on the other hand, were found to work very satisfactorily, and as the result of the system the lads trained in this handicraft at Lambeth and Burslem received the highest awards, and also the freedom of the City, at the exhibition which was held by the Turners' Company at the Mansion House some time ago. Sir Henry Doulton states that he has been able to develop this art only by the patient training of youths in "throwing," and by selecting those youths who have shown exceptional skill and taste in this difficult craft. When several vacancies occurred in December of 1890 three lads, who were sons of journeymen employed by the firm, were put in training. "At this point," says Sir Henry, "I was surprised by receiving a demand from a Trade Union, 'Affiliated to the London Trades Council,' that there should in future be only one apprentice to every seven journeymen. I urged on a deputation of the workmen that under such conditions past progress would have been impossible, and that had such a cast-iron rule existed in the past, few, if any, of those present would have been trained as potters. I pointed out that in the past there was no excessive employment of learners, nor was this so at the present time. On the contrary, the proportion at present was less than at any time during the last fourteen years. As to the future, I felt convinced that the numbers in training were abso-

lutely needed. Within two hours I received the following notice :

“ ‘ LONDON POTTERS’ TRADES SOCIETY,
 “ ‘ AFFILIATED TO THE LONDON TRADES COUNCIL,’
 “ SOCIETY HOUSE, 2nd Dec., 1890.

“ ‘ To Sir Henry Doulton.

“ ‘ DEAR SIR,—Having heard the report of the deputation you received this morning, and your determination to keep the three boys in dispute on the wheel, it is our duty to inform you that at a mass meeting of your *employés*, labourers excepted, this afternoon, it was unanimously decided that, unless you agreed to take the three boys in question off immediately, every piece worker will cease work at once, and every day workman on Thursday next at 6 p.m. This comprises the following branches: Throwers, Stone Moulders, Terra Cotta ditto, and Lathers.’ ”

Of course no employer who respected himself could yield to such an impudent attempt at coercion as this. Were he to do so he would simply acknowledge that he is incapable of understanding or of conducting his business, and that he is willing to hand over its management to those whom he employs and pays. Sir Henry Doulton says : “ The action taken in this case is an instructive illustration of some modern developments of Trades Unionism. Such a tyrannous attempt to exercise unlimited control over the employer I have felt bound to resist, because I believed that the principle contended for would only result in ultimate ruin to the trade. That I have been completely successful is due to no want of stubborn obstinacy on the part of the workmen. But I have to point out that such contentions as the present, even if they secure to the Unions their unreasonable demands, must certainly end as disastrously to the English working man as to our own present national supremacy in manufacture, and would but prove fatal to improvement and extension in our national industries.”

The strike which followed upon Sir Henry's determination not to be dictated to or coerced lasted for three months. All the works of the firm, including those in South Staffordshire and at Burslem, were picketed. Other firms of potters

were warned against supplying Doulton's with goods, and their works were also picketed. Men who had been for years working for the firm at excellent wages were forced by intimidation to leave their employment, and thus their families were in mid-winter deprived of the necessities of life. Nevertheless, the London Trades Council sanctioned and upheld the strike, and appealed to all the affiliated unions to support the men. In Sir Henry Doulton's words: "Agitators have been continually employed to incite the men against their employers, and all the resources of modern Socialistic warfare have been brought into play, regardless of the ultimate result to the trade and manufacture." In the end the men had to unconditionally surrender to Sir Henry Doulton, as is always the case where an employer shows that he has a backbone, and does not mean to be squeezed. But how abysmal must be the folly of Trade Union leaders and workmen who thus attack an employer who has practically created a new industry, and thereby found profitable employment for something like 5000 persons, and who, after making a malignant attempt to injure the employer (who has been to them a benefactor), are compelled to unconditionally surrender, only to find that they have succeeded in injuring nobody but themselves and their families. This strike, it may be remarked, was not strictly a product of the New Unionism, but was promoted by the older Trade Unions—which is only one more proof of the fact that the spirit of the new Socialistic Labour movement is permeating and dominating Trade Unionism as a whole.

While these strikes were going on in this country, similar conflicts were taking place in other countries. At Rotterdam some 5000 dock labourers, anxious to emulate their fellows in London, went on strike. The Dutch authorities, however, acted in a most vigorous manner, which contrasted strongly with the supineness of the Home Office in London during our Dock Strike. When the strikers began to riot the police at once charged them with bayonets, and troops were called out, several volleys being fired into the crowd. As a natural consequence the strike was practically over as soon as it had commenced. The Australians, who had done so much to keep the London Dock Strike alive, now found

that they had quite enough to do to cope with their own labour troubles. Retribution followed sharply upon their folly in supporting the London strikers. At Melbourne the gas-stokers went on strike; the sea-board traffic was practically stopped by a strike of the seamen; at Newcastle the mine owners decided to close the pits; foundries were stopped for want of fuel; and it was found necessary in the principal cities to strengthen the police force and to swear in special constables. Australian workmen appealed to England for aid, and the Dockers' and other Unions responded by sending large donations. The United Trades Committee sent 3500*l.*, the United Labour Council 3250*l.*, Amalgamated Engineers 1600*l.*, the Gas Stokers 300*l.*, the Bricklayers 250*l.*, Parliamentary Committee 1978*l.*, London Trades Council 1000*l.*, Sailors and Firemen's Union 1000*l.*, the Boiler Makers' 500*l.*, Dockers' Union 1000*l.* In Sydney serious rioting occurred, and the streets were cleared by the police and the troops. The Government of New South Wales resolved to buy up all the rifle ammunition in Sydney to prevent its getting into the hands of the strikers. In fact the strike threatened to resolve itself into a fierce struggle between the forces of Authority and of Anarchy, and the resources of the Australian Governments were severely taxed to prevent the forces of Anarchy from becoming supreme. Happily they realised the gravity of the crisis and showed no weakness, and so in the end they triumphed. This general strike in Australia was a logical development of the Trades Unionism which has been petted and flattered in those colonies for many years. It was in the main a struggle not only for the recognition of the Unions, but for the right of those Unions to dictate to the employers that they should employ only Unionist workmen; in other words it was a mortal combat between Free Labour and Trade Unionism. Free Labour triumphed. A remarkable feature about this case was that Mr. H. H. Champion, who was a leader of the Dock Strike in this country, took a strong stand against the extreme pretensions of the Trade Unions in Australia.

The principal strikes which have been referred to in this chapter have several features in common; they all clearly reveal the *animus* and the tactics of the New Unionism, and

accentuate its dangerous characteristics ; and they all show that a new and mischievous force is at work in the industrial world. The facts tell their own story, and they would not be made any more impressive by rhetorical embellishments ; they may well be left, therefore, to speak for themselves, as they will certainly do in the case of intelligent and interested readers, to whom they will suggest not a few grave reflections and forebodings.

CHAPTER III.

RAILWAY AND OMNIBUS STRIKES.

CLOSELY connected with the Dock Strike in Cardiff, which was dealt with in the last chapter, were the railway strikes which took place in South Wales, of which Cardiff is the centre. For two years this important industrial region was torn by sharp dissensions; rumours and threats of strikes were of constant occurrence; and several strikes of a disastrous nature actually occurred. In August, 1890, just a year after the Dock Strike in London, rumours of serious trouble began to circulate in and around Cardiff. The men had given in their notices, which were to expire on August 6th, when it was declared from 150,000 to 200,000 men would be on strike. The Railway Companies issued announcements warning the public that there might be considerable delay in the running of the trains, owing to the action of the men; they also gave instructions to their officers to take on all the men who required work without any regard to Trade Unionism, and thousands of applications for employment were received as soon as the requirements of the companies were made known. Mr. E. Harford, of the Railway Men's Amalgamated Society, boasted that the men had 100,000*l.* at their back, and that they could, if necessary, procure another 100,000*l.*, and prolong the strife for six months. Ben Tillet, as a matter of course, also appeared upon the scene, though it is not quite clear what he had to do with railway men—except, indeed, that, like all agitators, his interest lies in fomenting strife between employers and their workmen, and in making bitter and foolish attacks upon capitalists. Tillet said in Cardiff, at the end of July, 1890, that “if the railway authorities thought they could take advantage of the men they miscalculated, and there would be war to the bitter end.” By-the-by, men of this type always talk of “war to the bitter end,” but if the

employers talk in the same strain they are denounced as callous and cold-blooded brutes.

On August 5, the directors of the South Wales Railway Companies met and passed a resolution strongly condemning the demand of the men that none but members of their Union should be employed at the Docks. A deputation of railway men, accompanied by Mr. Harford, waited upon the Directors, who declined to meet anybody but their own workmen, and consequently Mr. Harford and his deputation had to retire. On the same day the Executive of the Cardiff Chamber of Commerce also condemned the demand of the men with reference to the employment of non-union labour at the Docks, and the general feeling of the Chamber was that to yield to such a demand would be most impolitic, and that a lock-out would be the less of two evils. A letter was also sent from the Chamber to the three Railway Companies declaring that the right of Free Labour in the port of Cardiff ought to be maintained at all costs. A correspondence on this point took place between Sir W. T. Lewis, the manager of the Bute Docks, and Mr. W. Riley, the Chairman of the Cardiff Chamber of Commerce. Sir William said he had had an interview with some of the men, who made it a condition precedent to discussion that the Dock Company should undertake to employ none but Trade Unionists, to which condition he had flatly refused to agree. Mr. Riley, in reply, said that the merchants of the port would strengthen the hands of the Dock Directors by every means in their power, even to the extent of ordering a lock-out, rather than that Free Labour should be excluded from the Bute Docks. At the largest meeting of shipowners ever held in Cardiff, which took place on the same day, the following resolution was passed: "That this association protests most strongly against the arbitrary and tyrannical conduct of the Seamen's, Engineers', Dockers', and Labourers' Unions at Cardiff, as evinced in the present dispute, and considers that the time has arrived when, in the interests of government, and of commerce generally, a firm and continued stand should be made against such conduct: that this Association binds itself to use all legitimate means to preserve for employers the right to engage Free Labour, and decides that the ship-owners of the United Kingdom be requested to support this

Association by keeping their vessels away from the port pending the dispute ; and that the thanks of the Association be tendered to the Directors of the local Docks and Railways for the firm stand they are making."

On August 6th the Railway Strike began. The drivers and firemen and guards of the trains on the Taff Vale, Rhymney, and Barry Railways left their engines during the night, and in the morning the signalmen, "according to instructions from their leaders," left their duties, after placing all signals at danger. Scores of thousands of men were thrown into idleness, and the whole trade of South Wales was paralysed. Hundreds of railway men from the Midlands and other districts were imported for the purpose of carrying on the railway traffic, and these were housed in barricaded huts which had previously been erected for their reception.

The objects of this South Wales strike were ostensibly to secure the following conditions of labour for the men ; 1, a ten hours working day, or a week of sixty hours ; 2, Over-time, up to eight hours, to be paid at time and a quarter ; 3, Sunday work to be paid at time and a half. The real purpose of the fight, however, was different from and greater than any of these things, although it was carefully kept in the background. That purpose was to secure the recognition of the Railway Men's Union ; that is to say, the Directors were required to recognise this Union in such a sense as to be ready to confer with its representatives, who had nothing whatever to do with the management of their lines of railway, and to be ready to exclude non-union men from the ranks of their workmen. In other words they were asked to practically yield the management of their business into the hands of their workmen, and to support the Unions in their odious tyranny, by declaring that no man was fit for employment on their lines unless he wore the Union badge. In fact they were to become the cats-paws of the Trade Unions. One of the organs of the strikers, referring to the demands just enumerated, said : "Be they right, or be they wrong, they did not at this moment concern the *vital points* of the dispute. That concerns a much more elementary demand of labour—the right of presenting its case collectively and not individually ;" a

roundabout way of saying that the Trade Unions were to be conceded the right of managing the business of the employers. In resisting this impudent demand the Cardiff employers were opposing the most iniquitous coercion of modern times, the tyranny of Trade Union combinations, and they opposed it not less in the interests of Labour than in their own interests. For incontestably it is the first interest, the most elementary right, of the working man, that he shall be free to sell his labour in the best market that he can find, and that when he has found that market, and is willing to supply his labour on the terms offered to him, no third party shall be permitted to step in between him and his new employer, and enforce conditions upon both himself and that employer which neither of them desires. It is one of the anomalies of the order of things which the New Unionism proposes to establish that the very men who are most enthusiastic in praise of Free Trade are at the same time most indignant in their denunciations of Free Labour. The New Unionists wish to maintain Free Trade in order that they may have cheap food; they also wish to protect labour in order that they may obtain high wages. They have not the sense to perceive that the Free Trade system is based upon Free Labour, or in other words upon the competitive system, or in still other words upon the right of labour to circulate through all places and all industries without artificial impediments being placed in its way. Nor are they capable of discerning that if they were to succeed in putting Labour into shackles they would at the same time bring back Protection in its most harsh and unmitigated form. If Capital is to be at the mercy of supply and demand under a system of Free Trade, so must Labour also be at the mercy of supply and demand under a system of Free Labour. Political economy may be scoffed at as old and outworn, but it will quickly prove that it has sufficient vitality and strength to teach its ignorant detractors that if the nation is to continue to be subjected in its industrial life to the fierce competition of the whole world arising from Free Trade, then the individual workman must also submit to the unrestricted action of the same competitive forces which are at work in the sphere of labour. It is perhaps conceivable that we might have Free

Labour without Free Trade ; it is not conceivable that Free Trade can be maintained without Free Labour.

The capitalists of South Wales were, on the whole, fairly united in resisting the attacks of the Trades Unions. They displayed some weakness, however, in ultimately consenting to confer with Mr. Harford, after having at first refused to recognise him or have any dealings with him. Ultimately terms of settlement were arranged between Mr. Inskip and Mr. Harford, the former representing the companies and the latter the men. On the whole there never was a strike more inexcusable than this in South Wales, which, although it did not last long, cost a quarter of a million of money. The most unsatisfactory feature of it was that the Unionists were able to claim a victory, owing to the fact that the Railway Directors, after repudiating Mr. Harford, afterwards accepted him in the character of plenipotentiary on the part of the men.

If the Railway Strike in South Wales was wanton, that which occurred in Scotland at the end of 1890 was wicked. This strike was marked by every feature by which the hostility and the malignity of the men towards the Railway Companies could possibly be manifested. The time when it occurred, namely just before Christmas, was precisely the time of the year when the interests of the railway shareholders could be hit the hardest. In Scotland the Christmas railway traffic is much heavier than it is even in England, and the consequence was that by striking at this particular time the Companies could be subjected to a loss of many thousands of pounds a day. Moreover, the attack was so organised as to include the three principal railways of Scotland, and thus paralyse the traffic, not in one district alone, but throughout the whole country ; indeed, everything indicated that the plans of the strikers had been cunningly devised and carefully matured beforehand. The workmen manifested the most utter disregard both as to the property of the Railway Companies and the safety of the public. Signalmen came out wholesale. Many of the signal-boxes were left empty without any warning, the fact only being discovered by drivers and guards when they reached the boxes, and the train had to crawl along cautiously without the line being signalled clear. This difficulty was partly

overcome by drafting station-masters and other officials, who had been promoted from the post of signalmen, into the chief signal-boxes, and by switching the less important stations; but of course, to carry on railway traffic under such conditions was so difficult as to be almost impossible, and was as dangerous as it was difficult. Pickets were placed at all stations, and some of these were instructed to stop the trains, which they actually endeavoured to do. Lawlessness, violence, and outrages were freely resorted to; indeed, not even the Dock Strike in London was disgraced by more infamous attacks upon life and limb, liberty and property, than was this Railway Strike in Scotland. Signal-boxes were wrecked, stations were damaged to the extent of hundreds of pounds, stones were dropped from bridges upon locomotives with the object of injuring drivers and stokers, attempts were actually made to wreck trains. Even the dynamiter is not a more malignant foe to society than the train-wrecker. Serious rioting occurred in the streets of many towns, and peaceable men who wished to work were ferociously assaulted and grossly intimidated, some of them being seriously injured, and most of them thoroughly terrorised. Rowdiness was not, however, permitted to be triumphant. The authorities of the Scottish towns were fully alive to the danger, and on the whole they acted with commendable vigour and promptitude, both military and police being freely used. Matters were complicated by the fact that many of the railway *employés* lived in houses belonging to the Railway Companies, and that some of these were evicted. At Motherwell, while these evictions were proceeding, both the military and the police had to charge a mob, and several people were injured. All this was, of course, most lamentable and regrettable, but the strikers, and the strikers alone, were responsible for it. These men had the right to refuse to work if they chose to do so, but the fact that they went on strike gave them no right whatever to retain the possession of property which did not belong to them, and to garrison their homes against eviction after the fashion of Irish Leaguers, whose too successful practices they were evidently once more trying to imitate.

The fight was conducted with true northern stubbornness,

and lasted some five weeks. During this time the Railway Companies carried on their traffic as they best could, and naturally, even the best was very inferior. The North British Company, which had to bear the brunt of the attack, and was at the same time considered the weakest, had as its general manager Mr. John Walker, a man of extraordinary strength of will and firmness of character, who, like Sir W. T. Lewis, Sir Henry Doulton, and Mr. George Livesey, from the first determined that he would not be beaten. No doubt his example strengthened the managers of the other Companies involved. As usual, there was no lack of men who were willing to work and fill the places of the strikers; indeed, it was only by the employment of these men that the Companies were able to carry on any traffic at all. The Caledonian Company were able to actually fill up every position which had been left vacant by the strikers. The Railway Directors from the first took up the position that the men must return to work as a condition precedent to their grievances being considered, simply because they had violated their contracts by leaving their employment without notice, and this contention on the part of the Directors was eminently reasonable. When the strike had lasted some time, as usual, busybodies of various kinds, some of them more or less eminent, began to offer their services as mediators. But both the North British and the Caledonian Directors, wiser than the London Dock Directors, positively rejected mediation, and declined to concede either the ten hours day or the sixty hours week, while they decidedly refused to recognise the Executive of the Amalgamated Railway Workmen's Society.

Of course the Directors were violently abused for doing what the workmen claimed to have a perfect right to do, namely, to fight in defence of their own interests. Evidently the lessons of the London Dock Strike, the Southampton Dock Strike, and the strikes at Liverpool and Cardiff had not been lost upon the Scottish Railway Directors. They perceived what the New Unionism was aiming at, and they also realised that unless they were prepared at once to hand over their property to a set of professional agitators and those who were deluded by them, they must make a resolute stand.

A singular feature in connection with this Scottish Railway Strike was that it was commenced by the unauthorised action of a handful of men in Glasgow, and commenced against the wishes of the Union leaders. These leaders, however, instead of making a resolute attempt to stop a strike of which they did not approve, and announcing that they would resign their positions if the strike went on, feebly yielded to the malcontents, and ultimately not only sanctioned the strike but loudly commended it. Verily a significant illustration of the fact that as regards modern Labour movements it is not the dog that wags the tail, but the tail that wags the dog. Trade Unions would not commit such foolish blunders as they often do, and spread strife and ruin over entire districts, if they were managed by shrewd and strong men. These Unions require nothing so urgently as good generalship.

The result of the Scottish Railway Strike was another crushing defeat for the New Unionism, as the men had practically to accept the terms of the Companies at the end of a protracted struggle, so that while they practically gained nothing, they lost their wages during the five weeks of the strike. What is more, many of them permanently lost their situations, for the Companies, more noble than the Gas Committee at Leeds, declined to dismiss the men who went to their assistance and whom they had permanently engaged, and took back the strikers only to fill up vacancies. No doubt many a railway workman in Scotland down to the present hour curses the day that he first listened to the advice of labour agitators. Thus ended the first attempt of the New Unionism to invade Scotland.

The Omnibus Strike, which occurred in London at the beginning of June, 1891, was in every respect one of the most important of the strikes which have taken place during the last few years. There is, however, one essential distinction between the Omnibus Strike and most of the others, inasmuch as it was in the main an effort to obtain shorter hours of work, and it must be admitted that in this case the men had some reason on their side. Nevertheless, they were not content to strike merely against excessive hours of labour; for whilst they asked for shorter hours they also asked for increased wages.

The Omnibus Strike was accompanied by all the well-known features which have characterised every great strike which has occurred since the Dock Strike. There were plenty of men ready to take the places of the strikers; the strikers by violence prevented their places being taken by those men; they also injured the property of their employers, cutting harness, overturning omnibuses, and even for some days refusing permission for the horses to be fed and watered. At the very commencement of the dispute, the two Companies concerned offered to concede the 12 hours' day, but they refused to give any increase of wages. As the men professed to be fighting simply for shorter hours, that they might have more time to spend with their wives and children, this concession ought to have satisfied them; but they refused to accept it and continued the struggle, the end of it being that they had practically to accept the Directors' terms after all. The result of the Omnibus Strike was virtually another defeat for the New Unionism. Exceedingly little has been heard of Mr. Thomas Sutherst and his satellites since this *fiasco*.

The Omnibus Strike in London was largely occasioned by the success of a similar strike in Paris. In relation to their Omnibus Strike the Parisian public acted precisely as the London public had done with regard to their Dock Strike; while the French Government gave even more encouragement to the strikers than our own Government gave to the dockers. Indeed, M. Constans, Minister of the Interior (Home Secretary), went so far as to inform the Paris Omnibus Company that if it did not come to terms with its workmen he would municipalise its property, which practically meant that he would confiscate it. This, for a Minister of a free Republic, was a most arbitrary course, all the more reprehensible because it was dictated by the basest motives of expediency. The curse of Demos-worship is over French politics as well as our own. So strong a measure was unprecedented in the annals of civilised nations, as it was unparalleled in its folly and in its blighting effects. A few more steps of the same kind would have effectually driven all capital out of France, and substituted desolation for the prosperity of that thriving country. One of the lessons which Democratic Governments have got to learn is

that they cannot ride rough-shod over moral and economic laws with impunity. Retribution will dog, with the inevitableness of fate, the footsteps of any Government which sacrifices the fundamental rights and liberties of its intelligent and prosperous citizens for the sake of gaining the temporary support of other citizens who are neither prosperous nor intelligent. And sooner or later such a Government will be overwhelmed in disgrace and disaster, and will perish amid the execrations of an indignant people whose interests it has betrayed. To the credit of M. Constans, however, it must be admitted that if he momentarily lost his head over the Omnibus Strike he soon recovered himself. When the Paris railway men, encouraged by the success of the Omnibus Strike, thought they would try their hands as well, the Minister of the Interior greatly surprised them by offering to place at the disposal of the Railway Companies a corps of army men who had been specially trained in railway work. The result of this action on his part was that the Railway-Strike collapsed at once. Furthermore, when the Paris bakers imitated the tactics of the omnibus and railway men, and went on strike, M. Constans supplied bakers from the army to the employers, who not only got their bread better baked than before, but also made larger profits out of its sale. The bakers, seeing that they were thus checkmated, gave in at once. Mr. Matthews, or any other gentleman who may hold the post of Home Secretary in this country, might very profitably take a few lessons from the action of the French Minister of the Interior. In this old monarchical country we should not perhaps submit quite so readily to independent action on the part of Ministers as they do in Republican France; at all events there would be a loud and fierce outcry if our Ministers were to supply army men to take the places of strikers—though if this had been done during the Dock Strike it would have been an immense service to the nation; but at any rate we are entitled at the very least to expect that our Government will take up an impartial attitude between the two combatants in a strike, and give favour to neither, but a fair field and legitimate protection to both.

The fashion in which railway strikes are dealt with in another Republic of Liberty, namely, the United States, is

also very significant. They had a strike going on in connection with the New York Central Railway at the same time as the South Wales strike was proceeding in this country. But the way in which the two strikes were treated by the authorities is very significant indeed. There, as here, the Companies had plenty of men willing to work in place of the strikers; but there, not as here, the men willing to work were efficiently protected, and not left at the mercy of crowds of frenzied strikers. The State militia was called out to supplement the efforts of the police in the work of protecting free labourers; and the result was that trains were freely run by non-unionists under the protection of the authorities, with the consequence that the strikers lost their places. The American Railway Companies, however, do not merely depend upon the police and the military; nor indeed do American employers generally. They rely upon that peculiar institution of their own—the Pinkerton Police. During railway strikes the Companies engage Pinkerton detectives, who are fully armed, to accompany and protect the trains. During this strike on the New York Central a large number of these police rode on the cars in order to terrorise the crowds along the lines, and one of them shot at a boy of fifteen for throwing a stone, while another shot into the crowd, and was arrested by the State police, who were immediately attacked by Pinkerton's men. A fight ensued between the two bodies of police, which resulted in the rescue of the man who had been arrested. The Pinkerton Police also fired a dozen shots into the crowd, while on another occasion twenty shots were fired, and persons were wounded by each shot. The Vice-President of the New York Central Railway said he considered the firing of the Pinkerton Police was fully justified. These seem strange and almost barbarous practices to English minds, but we are only too likely to become so familiar with them as to take them in the same matter-of-fact way as the Americans do. American employers have been driven to adopt these savage and brutal methods of defending their property by the brutal and savage attacks which are made upon them and their possessions by such organisations as the Knights of Labour, which does not hesitate to wreck trains, and endanger the lives of innocent passengers. in order to

defeat the companies and maintain its own authority and *prestige*. The New Unionism here is travelling on precisely the same lines as have been followed by the Unions in America, and the ultimate results will be the same here as they have proved to be there. If things go on as they are now going we shall soon have our Pinkerton Police, and all the rest of the accessories of real industrial war.

The consideration of these railway strikes suggests such questions as these :

Ought strikes to be possible on railways at all ?

Is it in accordance with sound public policy, to say nothing of public convenience, that engine-drivers, guards, and signalmen should be permitted to leave their posts without a moment's warning ?

When such strikes do occur, how ought they to be dealt with ?

These are questions of vital importance, and they should receive the careful and unprejudiced consideration of every intelligent citizen. The public as a whole seem to be far too much disposed to look upon railway companies as privileged monopolists, and enemies of the common good, instead of regarding them as powerful promoters both of social comfort and of commercial prosperity, which they undoubtedly are. If Parliament has conferred certain privileges upon railway companies, it has done so because it believed itself to be acting in the interests of the community as a whole, and not because it wished to enrich railway shareholders ; besides which railway enterprise is subjected to legal regulations and restrictions such as are not imposed upon ordinary commercial undertakings, so that the railways have to pay for their privileges. The tendency nowadays is to harass and handicap railway enterprise by heaping upon the Companies one disability after another, and by continually intermeddling with their affairs and thus diminishing their power of self-government. There is grave danger that this tendency will be pushed a great deal too far. Railways, like other commercial enterprises, should be interfered with by the State as little as possible. Wise rulers exhibit their wisdom by never thrusting their hands into the management of private business undertakings except when they are absolutely forced to do so. It is quite certain that as regards

the railways of our own country the State has quite as much to do with them as it ought to have, and probably a great deal more than is good for them.

The assumption which generally underlies attacks upon railways is that they are immensely wealthy corporations, and that their directors and shareholders are drawing exorbitant salaries and dividends. This idea is, in the main, entirely fallacious. No doubt there are a few fortunate people who happen to be holders of original stock in our largest railway companies, and these derive a handsome revenue from their investments; but the majority of the shareholders, who have had to purchase their stock at high prices, seldom receive more than four per cent. upon it, while they very often receive less. Even this modest dividend will soon be seriously diminished, even if it does not vanish altogether, under the spiteful intermeddling of vain and ignorant politicians. No class of property has suffered more since 1889, the year of the Dock Strike, than railway property. In that year there was a large increase of railway dividends, simply because the railways added 4,131,100*l.* to their receipts, whilst their expenditure increased by only 2,332,000*l.* In 1890 the receipts, or gross revenue, again showed a large increase, but the expenditure showed even a larger augmentation, owing chiefly to the higher cost of labour, coal, and iron. Since then receipts have diminished, although the expenditure has continued to increase, which simply means that the money which should have gone into the pockets of railway shareholders in the shape of profits has gone into the pockets of workmen in the shape of increased wages. During the half year ending June 30th, 1891, over half a million was added to the receipts of the fifteen leading English railways; but the whole of this half million, and even something beyond it, was swallowed up by extra expenditure. Consequently dividends were cut down by from one-half to one per cent. Some companies could not even pay these reduced dividends without dipping largely into their reserve funds or carrying forward exceptional expenditure. Everything indicates that the tendency of railway stocks is, and is likely to be for some time to come, downwards. Nevertheless, railway workmen, and the agitators who thrive upon

their discontent, and even not a few members of Parliament, are doing their very utmost to cripple the energies and to still further reduce the revenues of the proprietors and the directors of our railways.

The contention that railway companies, because they enjoy a position which is somewhat in the nature of a monopoly, must therefore be content to bear exceptional burdens of responsibility, applies with equal force to the servants of railway companies, who are also in a sense servants of the public, and therefore cannot be allowed the same measure of irresponsible freedom as is given to an ordinary labourer. But this is a view of the matter which is entirely lost sight of by the workmen and their Unions. They are all for placing exceptional restrictions upon the companies, whilst they assume that the servants of the companies are to stand on precisely the same footing as the servants of private employers. But if ever the day comes when the State should decide to still further restrict the liberties of railway directors, the servants of those directors will find that their liberties will be curtailed in a proportionate degree, and they will be no longer able to jump off their engines, and march out of their signal cabins, without notice, unless they are content to bear the severe punishment which the State will then undoubtedly impose.

The railway companies will find that the most effectual way of preventing wanton strikes on the part of their workmen will be by meeting the combinations of the workmen with a combination of their own. Let them form a Railway Federation, as the shippers have formed a Shipping Federation. If they will do this, and act together as one man, every railway standing by every other railway, they will take the one step which will be more effectual than any other in bringing their workmen to their senses. Were they to do this, they would be able to concentrate their united strength upon any point that might be attacked, and to supply free labourers who had been properly trained in railway work whenever a strike occurred. In the presence of such a Federation a strike of railway men, however highly organised, however widespread, and however well supplied with funds, would be practically hopeless. The men would perceive it to be so, and consequently they would never

enter upon a strike under such circumstances. Here, as elsewhere, the best way to preserve peace is to be fully prepared for war. If along with this the railway companies would organise and train a special protective police force of their own, they would be able to contemplate the movements of the Trade Unions without the slightest feeling of alarm, and in the calm confidence of conscious strength. If the railway companies as a whole would act upon the suggestions here indicated, they would not only preserve peace and prosperity within their own borders, but they would most effectually stamp out the agitation which is continually going on with the object of compelling Parliament to shackle railway enterprise.*

* Discharged soldiers, many of whom leave the Army every year and go to swell the Army Reserve, afford most excellent material for railway companies, dock companies, &c. There is difficulty in finding such men ordinary employment; but they are an invaluable class where habits of discipline and loyalty are essential. If the railway companies were wise they would avail themselves of this source of supply to the utmost.

CHAPTER IV.

INSUBORDINATION IN THE PUBLIC SERVICES.

IT was remarked in the first of these chapters that a citizen of a civilised community would, if deprived of the protection which it is the duty of a civilised Government to afford him, be in a distinctly worse position than a barbarian in a savage country, inasmuch as the latter is compelled by his circumstances to stand prepared at any moment to defend his life and his property to the death; whereas the civilised citizen is trained to rely on the action of the civil Government for the protection of himself and his property, instead of upon his own right arm. How completely the English or American citizen is at the mercy of the Executive Government of the day will appear on very slight reflection. We have the police force to guard us from assaults and murder, from garroters and burglars, from mobs and riots, and to secure order and tranquillity in our streets and public places. For defence against the foreign invader we rely upon our army and navy. Under the conditions of modern life the multifarious and complex operations of business can only be conducted by correspondence and by telegraph, and for the proper conduct of this correspondence we depend upon a body of men who are the servants of the State. In great cities, where fire is a constant peril, and is apt to sometimes prove a veritable scourge, we have a body of specially trained firemen to cope with this danger.

Now, it is obvious that the community is absolutely at the mercy of these different orders of its own servants. If by any possibility these classes of public officials could be induced to combine against society in general, society would find itself not only defenceless against both internal and external foes, but it would also find itself bereft of the first necessities of existence, and reduced to a state of absolute paralysis, so that none of its proper functions would continue to be discharged. Commerce would be impossible; anarchy

would reign supreme. And what we have witnessed during the last five years clearly indicates a design on the part of a numerous body of persons to make war in this way upon the community. The tyranny of the Stuart kings, to emancipate ourselves from which we paid so terrible a price, was liberty itself in comparison with the more rank and odious tyranny of a Socialistic Democracy. A despotic king is powerless as compared with an army of voters who are actuated by cupidity and malignity. It has taken us three centuries, and has cost us an incalculable price, both in brains and blood, to win for this nation the liberties which it now enjoys ; but, looking at what has occurred during the past few years, it is quite conceivable that those liberties may be destroyed in one short day of madness on the part of our democratic masters. The nation is menaced by graver perils than any of those which it has encountered during its stormy past, graver because more insidious as well as more destructive, and yet neither our people nor their rulers seem to have their eyes open to the dangers which are impending. That the people generally should be so blinded is perhaps natural, and somewhat excusable ; but that such fatuity should be displayed by our rulers is melancholy indeed.

It has been the writer's duty in dealing with recent events to pass some severe strictures upon the conduct of the Government in dealing with these attacks upon society, more especially in connection with the London Dock Strike ; and it was intimated that the seeds then sown would bear a bitter harvest, and cause serious trouble in the future. In partial justification of these words we may point to the significant fact that Nemesis began to track the footsteps of the Government from the very moment that it first failed in its duty towards the peaceful and prosperous citizens from whom it derives its strength. Before many months had elapsed the Government found itself in conflict with various classes of its own servants, who were in a state of insubordination and rebellion, and it was compelled to do in its own defence precisely what it ought to have done in defence of the Dock Directors. Military, police, postmen, and firemen, inflamed by the harangues of incendiary Socialists, and encouraged by the uninformed sympathy of the public

and the supineness of the Administration, thought that they would mete out to their employer, the State, the same measure that it had meted out to the owners of dock property. In this there was a touch of ironical justice. Why should not Mr. Matthews and Mr. Monro be made to taste of the bitter fruit which they had compelled the poor Dock Directors to swallow? It seems morally certain that if the Dock Strike had been met by the Executive Government with prudence and vigour we should have heard nothing of strikes on the part of the servants of the State. The pusillanimity of the Government was a direct encouragement to its own servants to rise against it. Not even a powerful British Administration can escape the operation of the law which everywhere and evermore is true: "They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind."

The attempted strike on the part of the Metropolitan Police—for it was not more than an attempt—failed, owing partly to the decisive action which was taken by the authorities and partly to the steadiness of the older members of the force. The trouble began with the younger men, who were more susceptible than their seniors to Socialistic teachings, and also inclined to estimate a present increase of pay more highly than a pension which seemed to be far distant. These men were receiving for work, which, on the whole, is neither unpleasant nor laborious, wages above the market rate, with an assured increase if they behaved themselves, and with the certainty of an ultimate pension. They demanded, however, that 27*s.* should be the wage on entering the force, 30*s.* on entering the second-class, and 33*s.* on entering the first; that six years should be the limit of time before entering the first-class; that the duties should consist of an eight hours' shift out of every twenty-four; that the pension should be two-thirds of the wages; that after twenty-four years' service an unconditional release from duty should be granted; and that there should be reasonable remuneration for extra duty. These men had, of course, the right to make these demands (although they were palpably unreasonable), and they had also the right, if their demands were refused, to leave their employment. If they had sent in their notices, given up their clothes, and betaken themselves to some other work, they would have acted in a manly and straightforward

fashion. But straightforward and manly conduct is not to be expected from the modern working man of the "advanced" type, who, instead of acting upon his own reason and judgment, places his manhood at the disposal of some wily agitator whom he blindly follows. It must, however, be borne in mind that ordinary constables are drawn from the ranks of unskilled labourers, and a considerable proportion of Metropolitan constables, as regards intelligence, and honour, and morality, are not very excellent specimens even of the class to which they belong. Looking at the men themselves, it is not much more surprising that they should follow fiery demagogues than that the dock labourers should do the same thing ; but, looking at the circumstances of the two classes, there is certainly a marked difference, inasmuch as the policeman was well paid, well clothed, and had bound himself to obey the discipline of the force. The police had fraternised with the dock labourers a good deal during the great strike, and, in fact, had almost made common cause with them, and it was to this fact that their demoralisation was largely due. It must be admitted, moreover, that the discontent in the police force was not confined to the common constables ; a certain number even of the inspectors were influenced by it, and these latter commenced an agitation on their own behalf for higher wages. They asked that a divisional inspector should be paid £4 a week, a first-class inspector £3 10s., a second-class inspector £3, and other inspectors in proportion. If superior officers could lend themselves in this way to agitation, we cannot be surprised at the action of the men under them.

On July 6th, 1890, the discontent which had been smouldering among the London police burst forth, and culminated in an act of serious insubordination. At Bow-street, when 130 men were paraded for night duty they refused to obey the orders of the inspectors, the reason they assigned being that they disapproved of the transfer of one of their number, who had been particularly active in the agitation, to another division. When the superintendent arrived and took the names of a number of the men, they gave way and marched off to duty. Some hundreds of constables in plain clothes drawn from all parts of London had assembled in front of the Bow-street station, and these men were as ready to

engage in a riot as were the roughs whom they were supposed to control, many of whom had also assembled in the vicinity. Thirty-eight of the insubordinate constables were at once suspended, and to fill their places fifty men were drawn from other divisions. When these fifty men emerged from the station they were groaned at and hissed by their own comrades, and for a time it seemed as if there would be some rough work. The Bow-street constables sent the following notice to the Press Association: "The constables at Bow-street have this day decided, in the interests of townspeople and householders generally, that it will be desirable to close their premises early on Monday night, and safeguard by all possible means the entrance, as a strike of London policemen is now inevitable, and will take place at all divisions simultaneously at 9.15 p.m." The leaders of the movement claimed that at least 8000 men would join them, and asserted that they had been promised a large amount of support both in London and the provinces. John Burns himself could not have surpassed these Bow-street constables in impudence and in arrogance.

The threatened strike was to take place on July 7th. On the morning of that day, however, Sir Edward Bradford, the Chief Commissioner of Police, who had only just assumed office, visited Bow Street Station and dismissed fifty of the men who had refused to go on duty on the two previous evenings. The ceremony of dismissal was marked by brevity and sternness. The name and number of each man was announced to Sir Edward, and then he addressed the culprit in these terms: "You are liable to be prosecuted for this refusal of yours to do duty when called upon. It is a very serious offence. You are not fit to be a policeman if you cannot think for yourself and act for yourself, instead of being led away by others. The only punishment for such an offence is instant dismissal. Right about face! March!" This action of the Commissioner spread dismay among the disaffected constables, who, but for their leaders, would all have settled down quietly to their duties. But the leaders determined to continue the agitation, and to go out on strike shortly after nine o'clock on the evening of the 7th, "and to take steps to prevent other men who have not joined them from going on duty." Thousands of persons

assembled in the neighbourhood of Bow-street at about nine o'clock in the evening, and scenes of tumult, disorder and riot took place. Several policemen and inspectors were roughly handled, and for a time their lives were in danger. On two occasions earthenware spittoons were flung from the windows of the police-station at Superintendent Fisher, and of course, these could only have been thrown by constables. The mounted police being unequal to the work of clearing the streets, half a troop of the 1st Life Guards were called out, and their efforts were quickly effectual, although rioting and disorder continued more or less until one o'clock in the morning. Much damage was done to property, many persons were injured, and several were taken prisoners. Twenty more constables were suspended on the 7th. Although the centre of the disaffection was at Bow-street, it spread more or less to all the stations in the Metropolis, at many of which great difficulty was experienced in getting the men to go on duty. Nevertheless, the mischievous attempt to induce thousands of policemen to strike, and thus leave London at the mercy of ruffians and burglars, signally failed, owing more to the stern action of Sir Edward Bradford than to anything besides. Altogether some fifty-five constables were dismissed the force, and a number of others were suspended or degraded.

The police in the provinces were not greatly affected by the events which occurred in London, probably because Socialistic demagogues have not the same facilities for conducting their nefarious operations in small towns as they have in the Metropolis. At Bradford, however, the police were for some time agitating for an eight hours' day, and the Watch Committee of that town, on the 11th of August, 1891, actually recommended the Town Council to adopt an eight hours day for the police, and to engage a number of additional officers in order to make the scheme practicable; but the Council had the good sense to reject the recommendation by thirty votes against sixteen. It is surprising that a Watch Committee in such a town as Bradford could have so little regard for the ratepayers as to make such a foolish proposal. No town has suffered more severely in consequence of trade depression and labour agitation than Bradford, as we have already seen, and the distress which

as prevailed there would have been even more acute than it has been if this absurd recommendation of the Watch Committee had been acted upon; for the cost of the police force would have been largely increased in consequence. Why should men, who are already receiving above the market rate of wages, have their remuneration still further increased, largely at the cost of people who are much worse off than they are? An addition of 1s. a week to every policeman's wages in London would mean an extra cost of 25,000*l.* a year, which, of course, the ratepayer would have to find. But who cares for the ratepayer nowadays—especially if he belongs to the middle classes?

While this wave of insubordination was passing over the Metropolitan police a similar spirit was at work among the London postmen. These men also threatened to strike, and if Trade Unions and strikes were proper at all among servants of the State (which they are not), then it must be admitted that the postmen had more reason to be discontented than the policemen. At the same time their wages were quite up to the market rate, as is proved by the fact that if one man steps out of their ranks there are ten others ready to take his place; their hours are not excessive, and their work is of a healthy and interesting nature; they are clothed by the State, and in addition to all this each man is able to look forward to a pension. If they were dissatisfied with their wages and the conditions of their labour, they were at perfect liberty to try and improve them by legitimate means; but for men in such a position to strike is not only an act of disloyalty to the Government which employs them, it is also an outrage upon the community. If they did not like their work or their wages they were at liberty to leave them; they were not compelled by the State or by anybody else to continue in their position. The London postmen, however, like most of those who have struck at the instigation of the "new Unionism," were fighting mainly for the privilege of forming a union among themselves and for the recognition of that union by the Postmaster-General.

On May 16th, 1890. a meeting of postmen was held on Clerkenwell Green, in defiance of the regulations of the Department. Forty men who attended this meeting were fined or suspended. Many of these men had served from

eight to thirty years, and one of them was in receipt of 35s. per week. He had three stripes, all of which were taken away from him, and the forfeiture of each stripe meant the loss of a shilling per week, besides which another two shillings a-week was deducted from his wages. When this occurred it was defiantly announced that the Postmen's Union would see that "none of the men who had been punished suffered pecuniary loss," and would "quietly but actively organise resistance to Mr. Raikes." It may be admitted that Mr. Raikes acted with some severity, but in such a case as this the most merciful policy is to be rigorously severe at the outset.

On July 8th matters at the Post-office reached a crisis. The men at the General Post-office refused to go out with the 8 o'clock delivery of letters, though they went out with the 9 o'clock delivery. On the same morning a number of Unionist postmen drove some seventy non-union men out of the Parcel Post Depôt at Mount Pleasant, Clerkenwell. There were several free fights and the non-unionists pluckily stood to their guns, but in the end were overpowered. Most of the non-union men at the Central office were removed to the underground stores and guarded by police, and such of them as were allowed to work were similarly guarded. Feeble attempts were made by the strikers to picket the Post-office, but for the most part they were ridiculously ineffectual. About 100 men employed at the Mount Pleasant Post-office were discharged on July 9th, and the authorities announced that immediate suspension or dismissal would follow in the case of men at every office who refused to obey orders, or who molested men who were at work. The Postmen's Union, or in other words Mr. Mahon, Socialistic agitator, announced that all the men would be called out from the Metropolitan Post-offices, and Mahon valiantly boasted that if they found the public against them "as well as Mr. Raikes and his minions, they would be prepared to fight the public too." All this, however, was so much "bluff." In spite of Mr. Mahon's frantic efforts, and the "orders" which he issued to the men, the strike could not be made to "catch on." The great mass of postmen proved too sensible to throw up their livings and their pensions, and consequently the work of the Post-office,

though greatly delayed and disorganised, went on much as usual, and the public were very little inconvenienced. There can be no doubt, however, that the situation was a critical one, and that thousands of the men would have struck with alacrity had there been the slightest sign of weakness on the part of Mr. Raikes. His firm and just treatment of the men who disobeyed his orders, who left their work, and who assaulted their loyal comrades, was the means of saving London from a veritable peril. So the "Great Postmen's Strike," like the "Great Police Strike," fizzled out without doing any great damage, and covered its promoters with ridicule. Several of the poor fellows who were foolish enough to give up a constant situation, with good wages, in the Post-office, have never been employed since, and every month or two there has been a wail on behalf of these men. Originally there were some 400 of them, most of whom had wives and families, but 50 of them were taken back by Mr. Raikes, in August, 1891, although even these were disrated and deprived of their pensions. No doubt the punishment inflicted upon these men exercised a wholesome deterrent effect upon the majority of their comrades.

With policemen in London refusing to go out on duty, and actually turning themselves into rioters, and with postmen declining to fulfil their duties and imitating the most blackguardly of the dock labourers in their assaults upon the more reputable members of their class, it might well have been supposed that the lowest depths of disgrace and of danger had been sounded. But in this lowest deep a lower deep still was opened. Some even of our soldiers so far forgot the honour of their profession and their duty to the State that they allowed themselves to imitate the discreditable conduct of the policemen and postmen who went on strike. Serious as is any breach of discipline among the civil servants of the State, insubordination among its military servants is still more alarming; and even the British Army has not proved impervious to the subtle Socialistic contagion which has been abroad of late. Several incidents have occurred of a very ugly and disquieting character, and although the whole truth is not known with regard to them, quite enough has leaked out to show that a very grave state of things exists. First of all, the 2nd Battalion of the

Grenadier Guards refused, in July of 1890, to obey orders, thus imitating the conduct of the police by a mutinous breach of discipline. For this wanton act of rebellion the 2nd Battalion of the Grenadier Guards was punished by being sent to Bermuda, where it was detained for about a year. Moreover the 3rd Battalion of the same regiment, while stationed at Chelsea Barracks, imitated the conduct of the 2nd Battalion; the 1st Company of the Battalion refused to parade when ordered to do so; the 2nd, 4th, 6th, and 8th Companies also manifesting a decided disinclination to obey orders. The authorities made light of these incidents, in doing which they were not wise, for in these matters it is best that the whole truth should be known. What is more, the chief officers of the army, and the heads of the War Office, did not act in such a manner as to convince the public that they realised the gravity of the position, or that they meant to deal with these rebellious servants of the State with wholesome rigour. What would the Iron Duke have said if during his lifetime a whole company of one of the crack regiments of the British Army had refused to heed the bugle call, and had only consented to go on parade after being coaxed and cajoled by their officers? Such an incident was enough to make Wellington, Colin Campbell, Havelock, and the rest of our fine old heroes, turn in their graves.

At Exeter Barracks, August, 1890, the 52nd Battery of the Royal Horse Artillery cut up about forty saddles and sets of harness in order to call attention to what they considered their grievances. A similar incident occurred at Chatham during the same month among the men of the Army Service Corps, and three of the drivers deserted. At Cork three soldiers of the Welsh Regiment threw down their helmets, and refused to take them up again until compelled to do so at the point of the bayonet. They then put them on backwards, made grimaces at their officers, and when marched off under arrest exhibited the utmost insolence and defiance. The 1st and 3rd Companies of the 2nd Battalion of the Coldstream Guards also refused to obey marching orders in July, 1891, the men manifesting a most insubordinate spirit, for which some of them were punished, although the officers seem to have acted with contemptible

weakness in dealing with these mutineers. At Sheerness a detachment of gunners belonging to number 25 Battery, Royal Artillery, refused to work, and broke out of barracks, twelve of them being sentenced to confinement to barracks for twenty-eight days, and twelve others for fourteen days. The same spirit also manifested itself among our blue jackets. Twenty-four of them belonging to H.M.S. *Bellerophon* seized some of the ship's boats at Newport, Rhode Island, and endeavoured to escape. The deserters were pursued, and as they offered some resistance one of them was shot, and another cut down with a cutlass. During the visit of the French Squadron to Portsmouth in the summer of 1891 all leave was stopped on board the British warships at Spithead, the result being that the crews manifested a spirit almost bordering on mutiny. The situation was so serious that the commanding officers of several vessels held a consultation with regard to it. A deplorable state of things was declared to exist in connection with the British navy, and a very uneasy impression prevailed in Portsmouth in consequence. Very disquieting accounts also reached England as to the state of discipline among the crews of some of our Mediterranean warships.

The fact of these things occurring pretty nearly at the same time, and also that they possessed certain features in common, indicates that they had a common origin. What that origin was cannot be doubted. Socialistic agitators have been able to reach some of the younger men both in the military and naval services, and thus the seeds of disaffection and rebellion have been sown. There is abundant reason to believe that the state of affairs, both in the army and navy, is much more serious than the authorities represent it to be. A system of agitation has been thoroughly organised in the services of the State, and deputations from both the army and the navy have actually waited upon certain agitators and requested them to organise a general strike against military orders and conditions.

The gravity of all this was sufficiently evident. Unhappily, there were not many signs of the real nature of the situation having been realised by those who are at the head of the great defensive departments of the State. Unless all this insubordination on the part of soldiers, marines, policemen,

and the other servants of the nation is repressed with a stern hand there are troublous times ahead. All these classes of men may have their grievances; but the redress of those grievances should be sought in a legitimate manner. The formation of Trade Unions among servants of the State, with the usual incidents of strikes and outbreaks of violence, is nothing short of downright mutiny, and mutiny is a crime which must be severely punished by any Government which intends to retain the respect or to conserve the prosperity of a civilised nation. Democratic Governments must learn how to make their authority obeyed and feared if they wish to preserve democratic institutions. If they cannot or will not learn how to do this, then it is certain they will have to make way for some other form of Government more worthy of the support of reasonable men. Nations have always preferred a military despotism which has ensured to the majority of the people security of life and property, even when it has seriously curtailed their liberties, to a form of government which has not been able adequately to safeguard the possessions and the lives of the people, although it might theoretically and nominally give them greater freedom. Of what use is liberty when no man can rest assured that he will be able to retain his own? Under such conditions liberty is nothing more than a name: it is a mockery of man's highest hopes. As it has been in the past so will it be in the future. History will repeat itself. Wherever a Government proves to a community that it cannot perform the most elementary functions of a Government, and protect the community from the ravages of the lawless and the unprincipled, the community will rise in its might and sweep such a Government away. Sooner or later, in some form or other, measures will be adopted for preserving the sanctity of human life and the security of personal property. The nation is greater than any Government; the conservation of the nation's fundamental rights is of infinitely greater moment than the perpetuation of any particular form of government. That is a good Government, whatever its name or form, which efficiently fulfils the true functions of government, which are of a much more simple and modest character than scientific politicians often represent them to be. If our Governments continue to pander to the prejudices

and to the selfishness of the more ignorant portions of the electorate, as successive Governments have done during the past few years irrespective of their political complexion, the result must be a catastrophe in one form or another.

The tolerance which was exhibited by the Government towards the demagogues who stirred up this rebellion among the civil and military servants of the country was a mistaken policy. Leniency towards such enemies of society is an injustice to society itself. Many of the constables, postmen, and soldiers who disobeyed orders and refused to work were severely punished, some of them so severely that they will suffer for many years to come, if not all their lives, and their punishment was just. But is it just that while they endure these heavy penalties those who led them on should escape scot free?

Perhaps it is not astonishing, considering the corrupting influences of democracy, that the Government should wink at the preaching of lawlessness so long as it is directed merely against ordinary workmen and their masters; but it might have been supposed that even the Government would have been stimulated into action when preachers of rebellion strove to turn their own servants against them, as was the case in connection with the police and with the postmen and the military. But even in these cases they were content to look on and do next to nothing. It is no justification of their conduct to say that they were not able to act with effect under the existing law. If they find that existing laws are not sufficient to enable them properly to carry out their duties as an Executive, their business is to get new laws made which will remedy the defects of the old ones.

There is one other reflection which may well be suggested to a thoughtful mind by the events which have been recounted in this chapter. It is that some special measures should be taken by the State to impress upon its servants the fact that they occupy a position of exceptional responsibility. Radical-Socialists are ever ready to point out that such corporations as railway companies, water companies, and so on, inasmuch as they are granted special privileges by Parliament, ought to be subjected to proportionate restrictions. How much more forcibly does this principle apply to those who serve the State in the Army and Navy,

the Post-office, and the police force? Surely all these men occupy a favoured position, and possess many advantages, such as fixed and regular incomes and pensions for declining years, which are not enjoyed by the working-classes generally. Ought they not, therefore, to be placed under special and rigorous regulations, and made to realise their responsibility to the Government and to the nation? Undoubtedly they ought. It is intolerable that policemen, postmen, and soldiers should go on strike in the same jaunty fashion as a number of street-sweepers might do. But this is an aspect of the matter which is studiously ignored by Radical politicians and agitators. They are all for imposing disabilities upon capitalists who have placed their money in railways and water works, on the ground that these companies receive certain privileges from the State; but they are just as decidedly against imposing disabilities upon Labour, even where, as in the case of the great State departments, it also occupies a privileged position. But what is sauce for Capital is sauce for Labour too. To thoughtful men it is obvious that one serious task to which the Government will before long have to address itself in this country is that of protecting the community against the selfish and capricious action of its own servants. The work will be a difficult one, owing to the fact that political power has now been placed almost entirely in the hands of the working classes, the majority of whom seem bent upon using that power mainly for the purpose of gratifying their whims and their resentments; nevertheless, it is a work which will have to be done if England is to remain a great and prosperous nation.

CHAPTER V.

ON SOME SOCIALISTIC TENDENCIES OBSERVABLE IN RECENT LEGISLATION AND MUNICIPAL ACTION.

IT is not proposed at this point to define the nature of Socialism, to discuss the question of its practicability, or to indicate what would be its results were it possible to secure its adoption. The purpose of this chapter is simply to glance at certain indications which have been given of late as to the direction in which we are travelling, and thereby to call attention to the dangers which threaten the community. We are on an inclined plane, and if we go on as we are now going we shall by-and-bye find ourselves at the bottom of it. It has been quite too much the fashion to mock the earnest men who have been trying to arouse the nation to a sense of the perils which are impending by reason of the stealthy but rapid advance of Socialism.

To treat of all the Socialistic measures which have been brought before Parliament and the country during the last twenty years, or even during the last ten, would require more than the whole of this book. It is not, however, essential to the purpose of this work that these measures should be treated exhaustively; for that purpose is, not to expound in detail this Socialistic legislation, but simply to convince the reader that the trend of thought and action in the political world is downwards towards the morass of Socialism. To illustrate and establish the truth of this view it is not necessary to do more than look at what took place during the one year 1892. The Free Education Act is one of the Socialistic measures that have been passed during the last few years by a Conservative Government. It may be admitted that in some respects this matter stands on somewhat the same footing as the Post-office; that the State can supply a cheaper and better system of education for the common people than could be supplied by private

enterprise ; and that it is clearly in the interests of the community that children should not be allowed to grow up in ignorance, which unfortunately many parents would allow them to do unless they were compelled to provide them an education. Where the politicians went astray, however, was in assuming that because the State compelled a man to educate his children it was therefore also compelled to defray the cost of that education. It would be just as logical to say that because the State compels a man to feed his children and to prevent them from running about the streets naked, it is also compelled to provide their food and clothing. It is just as much the duty of the parent to educate his child as to feed or clothe it, and it is not the duty of the State to relieve the parent of these obligations. The action of the Government in taking this duty into its own hands, instead of compelling parents to perform it, is an experiment which cannot be viewed without regret and apprehension by those who desire to see the more robust qualities of the individual citizen developed, and who wish to keep the spheres of State action and private action as clearly apart as possible. Even those who regard the experiment as one that may be justified on exceptional grounds, and who look upon the Free Education Act as one of those Socialistic measures which do not violently interfere with the operation of individual exertion, and who therefore supported the Conservative Government in its dubious course, may yet have serious cause to repent their conduct. The Socialists regard the Free Education Act as a large concession to their demands and as a triumph of their principles. Having got so much, they ask, as is their wont, for more. Now that children get their lessons free, they must also have their meals free. And if food, why not clothing ? If food and clothing, why not dwellings ? We may live to see the day when a Conservative Government (so-called) will propose to do all these things on the ground that they logically follow from this concession of Free Education.

We may now glance briefly at some indications of the progress of Socialism which have recently appeared in the sphere of municipal government. The Local Government Act which was passed a few years ago by the Government of Lord Salisbury has introduced changes of a deep and far-

reaching character into our municipal life. In the first place it has created County Councils in every district of the country, and these Councils are elected not only upon the principle of Household Suffrage but also upon the principle of Female Suffrage, and the principle of "one man one vote," so that the vote of the poorest labourer in the village exerts as much effect in creating the County Council and determining its character as the vote of the largest land-owner in the county does. The immediate result of this change has been to seriously diminish the influence of the classes who had heretofore been most active and powerful in the local government of the counties, and to introduce into county government a class of men who are to a great extent strangers to the work, and who in many cases were elected on purely party grounds, without any regard whatever to their qualifications for that work. Men of this latter class are naturally more concerned to please their constituents than to secure efficient and economical government, and at the same time they are imbued with the new Socialistic idea that the people are to be saved from all the ills which afflict them by Governmental action. It is obvious that the action of such men within the sphere of local government must be detrimental to the true interests of society at large. That the influence of many County Councils, upon which men of this class are dominant, is detrimental to the public good has already been abundantly demonstrated by experience. Perhaps the most signal illustration of this fact is supplied by the proceedings of the London County Council during the first six years of its history.

Before leaving this question of municipal action, a word or two may be said as to the competency of municipal bodies to undertake such functions as those which some of our new County Councils are anxious to assume. All the evidence that can be obtained upon the subject goes to show that whenever a public body undertake to meddle with building speculations, or to become landed proprietors, or lodging-house keepers, the door is not only opened to a good deal of patronage and corruption, but that in the end the enterprise is visited with ignominious failure. The City Improvement Trust of Glasgow, upon which two

millions of the ratepayers' money has been spent since 1866, is a case in point. According to a recent valuation nearly half the assets of the Trust have vanished through "depreciation." From a commercial and financial point of view the enterprise is a complete failure. Not only so, but the Glasgow Corporation, by entering the land market with unlimited capital as a buyer, disturbed and demoralised that market, and subsequently when it had to go into the market as a seller it injuriously affected the market in the opposite direction. A writer on the subject, who is evidently well informed, says : "The Glasgow Improvement Trust case, in short, may serve to prove to the general public what every owner of house property, estate agent, town surveyor, and architect in the United Kingdom has known for years, that an elective municipal body is quite incapable of managing property of this description economically or profitably."

A Report on the Municipal Ownership of Public Works was presented to the President of the United States early in 1892, a summary of which appeared in *Bradstreet's*. Even this Report, which declared generally in favour of the public ownership of tramways and gas and water works, recommended that these enterprises should not be worked by the municipalities, but should be let to the highest responsible bidder, which course offered the best prospects from the standpoint of combined economy and efficiency. The London County Council, however, has done its best to repel the contractors who would undertake such work under its auspices.

Recent events, together with the utterances of prominent statesmen during late years, may well suggest the reflection—What are we coming to? What with the violation of contracts and the confiscation of property in Ireland; an enormous expenditure of public money for the purposes of relieving parents of the primary obligation of providing for the education of their children and of setting people up in the small farming business; and all this on the part of Conservatives as well as Radicals; and then on the top of it all, schemes for old age pensions, and what not, it is difficult (or rather it is not difficult) to discover where we stand and whither we are going. The situation is both anomalous and

dangerous. No very far-reaching mischief has perhaps been done as yet; but we are on an inclined plane, sliding rapidly downwards towards the abyss of Socialism. It is high time that our political leaders pulled up in their perilous career, and set their faces like flint against the revolutionary torrents which threaten to sweep away so much of what is precious and vital in our national life and institutions. If they decline to do this and continue to attempt the impossible task of at once swimming with those currents and yet moderating the force of their flow, they will, by-and-bye, find themselves at the bottom of the gulf and their parties dashed to pieces, while the country will be left at the mercy of a pack of Socialistic wolves.

The strain of Socialism which runs through the utterances of so many of our politicians is one of the most ugly and disquieting features of the time. It is true that these Socialistic ideas are vague, intangible, nebulous, floating about in the upper air, and incapable of being reduced to rational and practicable forms; but they are all the more dangerous for that. The spectacle witnessed during the General Election, of a few hundred men cramming their hundreds and thousands of hearers with ideas which they themselves have never half digested or understood, is not calculated to make one very hopeful as to the future. Ignorance can only produce fruit after its kind. We have had a perfect deluge of Socialistic legislation in Ireland during the last dozen years, and the results of all these measures have simply been that the landlords have been crippled, while the tenants have received no real benefits, and that the country has been plunged into turmoil and anarchy; that the law has been defied and morality trampled under foot; that the idle, the dishonest, and the criminal classes have triumphed at the expense of the industrious, the virtuous, and the law-abiding; that liberty has been destroyed, property rendered worthless, and religion contemned; and, finally, that the capitalists of the world have for years shunned Ireland as though it were plague-stricken (as indeed it is). Yet with this object-lesson before our very eyes, we are invited, and by Conservative as well as Radical politicians, to enter upon a series of Socialistic experiments in Great Britain with

regard to Capital and Labour, the land question, the housing of the poor, old age pensions, the supply of gas and water, and the municipalisation of docks, tramways, railways, and other public undertakings. Such experiments can here and now produce only such results as have been produced in other times and countries by similar experiments, and those results have been uniformly disastrous.

The strategy of the Socialists is to work by underground means. "The thin end of the wedge" policy is in high favour with them. Their tactics now are to induce County Councils, municipal corporations, and even the House of Commons itself, to adopt measures of State Socialism such as those which have been adverted to, the effects of which would be to limit the area of private enterprise, and to extend the area of State action and control. The taking of docks, tramways, water works, and gas works out of the hands of the present proprietors and placing them under municipal control, with the ulterior object of joining hands with Trade Unions in order to increase wages and to force from the Legislature an Eight Hours day and other similar measures, and the insertion of provisos in contracts to the effect that the contractor shall pay Trades Union rates of wages, are Socialistic measures, inasmuch as the principle involved is that the general taxpayer shall be mulcted in order that some working men may obtain higher wages, and more favourable conditions of labour generally, than they could secure in a fair and open market. If these measures were to be carried, and the State were to fix the hours and the wages of labour, they would not only be detrimental to the community at large but specially injurious to working men. Yet our politicians, instead of pointing out the true value and effect of these proposals, indirectly encourage them in order to secure the working men's votes, or rather the votes of the ignorant and unthinking among workmen. The pliability of modern politicians, and their readiness to yield to Socialistic pressure, are perhaps more serious in themselves than anything that has been actually carried out, because they are symptoms of the fatal inability of democratic statesmen to make a stand for principle. Socialism is not the less virulent because it

is insidious, and its ultimate effects will not be the less deadly because they are brought about slowly and gradually instead of violently and rapidly. The Fabian Society and its sympathisers, who aim at permeating the political thought of the day with Socialistic ideas, and thus stealthily undermining the principles which lie at the base of civilized society, constitute a much graver danger to the community than the revolutionists who preach sedition and violence in Trafalgar Square. The effects of this change of policy on the part of the Socialists may be plainly discerned in the platform utterances of our politicians, and in the manifestoes and programmes which are continually being put forth by our political organisations. The *Times*, commenting upon the "Newcastle programme," on Dec. 10th, 1891, said: "Individual freedom, individual effort, the abolition of restrictions and obstacles, are no longer the objects for which Radicalism is striving. The Newcastle Programme is saturated with ideas of limitation and compulsion, the despotism of the majority, and the meddlesome action of the State." These are precisely the ideas and the aims of the Socialists, and they have now become the ideas and the aims of our political parties.

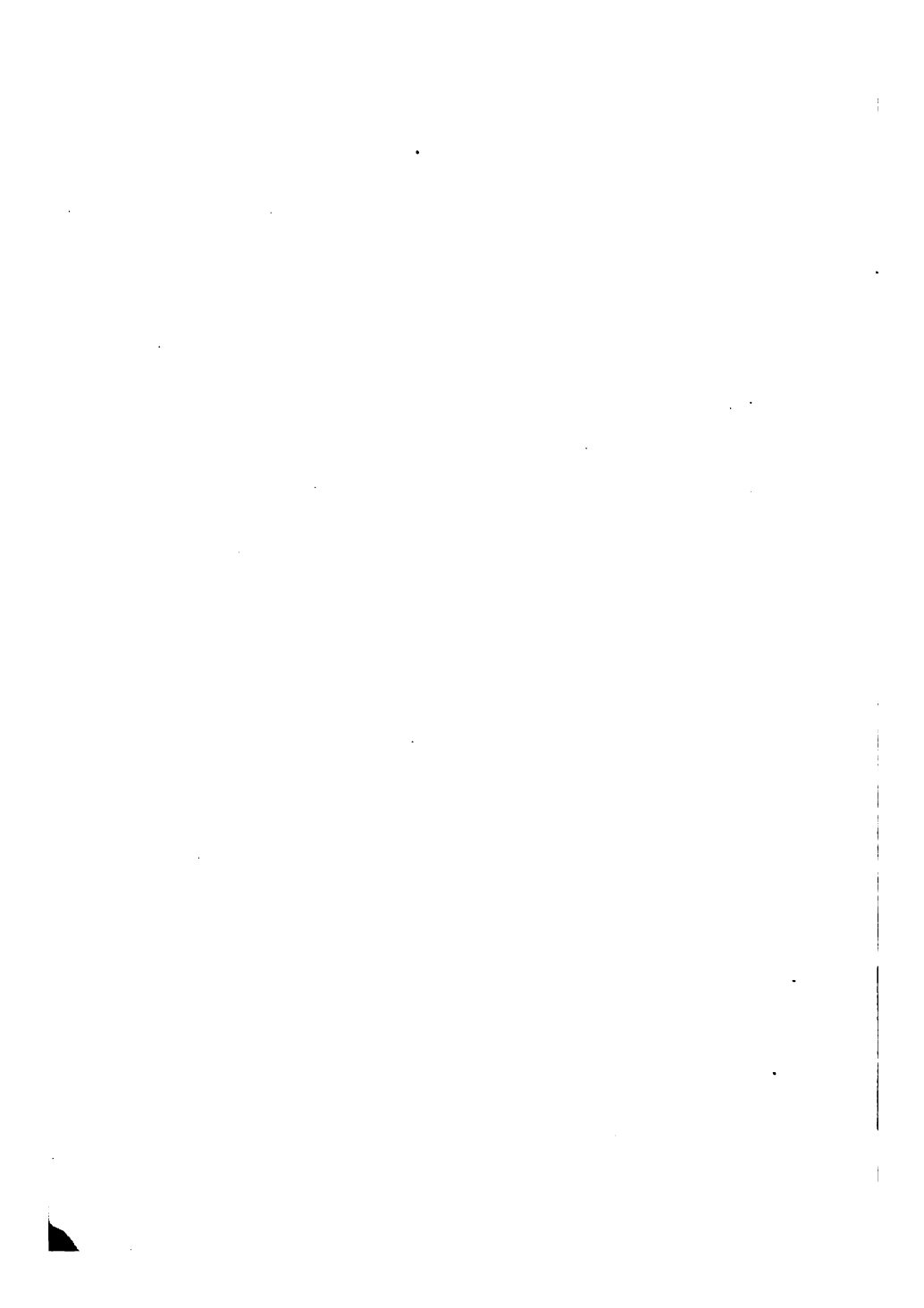
A cardinal fact in connection with recent developments of the Labour Movement is that Socialism is endeavouring to "nobble" Trades Unionism and to convert it into an instrument for the accomplishment of its own ends. With what success it has pursued this object may be judged from the fact that John Burns is able to boast that, out of the sixty resolutions passed at the Trades Union Congress in 1890, forty-five were of a Socialistic character, and from the further fact that the proposal in favour of a legislative Eight Hours day, which was defeated at the Dundee Congress in 1889 by 88 to 63, was carried at Liverpool in 1890 by 193 to 155. Here we clearly perceive the hand of the New Trades Unionism. These are its triumphs, and they are as important and significant in their way as the success of the Dock Strike. The Socialists mean to either bend Trades Unionism to their purpose or to break it. Appearances indicate that they will succeed in doing the former; for they have already managed to discredit Trades Unionism of the old type in the eyes of

working men as reactionary. Trades Unionists who are not in sympathy with Socialism are nowadays regarded with pity and contempt by the majority of their fellow members. Socialists conceived and carried out the Dock Strike, and the other similar strikes which have succeeded it. Never should it be forgotten that the Dock Strike was virtually originated at a Socialist Congress in Switzerland, and that it was talked of for days upon the Continent before anything was known of it in this country. Friedrich Engels, the successor of Karl Marx, telegraphed to the strike leaders:—"I envy you your work in the Dock Strike. It is the movement of the greatest promise we have had for years, and I am proud and glad to have lived to see it. If Marx had lived to witness this!"

A late German Ambassador to the Court of St. James is said to have affirmed that European diplomatists believe it to be the destiny of England to be the first nation to succumb to State Socialism. Ten years ago we should have laughed the very idea to scorn; but the matter wears a different complexion now. Socialism, thanks to the stupidity of a portion of the British public, and to the supineness of the British authorities, has of late won more than one remarkable victory. It is now arming itself for further exploits. There is serious trouble ahead. A dead set is to be made against the capitalist and against property in all its forms.

Clearly Herbert Spencer is right in denouncing the error, which he says pervades the thinking of all parties, that Social evils admit of immediate and radical measures, and when he exclaims—"Socialism seems like a wave of madness passing over the country."

The two great bastions upon which the greatness of this nation, and of every other civilised country, is built, are the liberty of the individual and the security of property; and the very breath of that liberty, the very foundation of that security, are those laws and institutions which have been bequeathed to us by the wisdom of our ancestors, and tested by the experience of centuries, and which would be ruthlessly torn up and destroyed by the political insanity which describes itself as Socialism.



BOOK II.

PROPOSED LEGAL AND POLITICAL
SOLUTIONS
OF LABOUR PROBLEMS;
OR THE
RELATIONS OF POLITICS AND LAW
TO CAPITAL AND LABOUR.

"Labour may be congratulated on the manifest desire now exhibited by society to accord to it fair, and even liberal, remuneration. That this may to some extent be attributed to the stand which workmen have by combination and organisation made in defence of their interests, may be fairly conceded. To combination for such legitimate objects no reasonable person can, or does, object; but when trade organisations are used for the purpose of imposing arbitrary restrictions on labour, of depriving the workman of his right as a free citizen to work how and as he pleases; or of arbitrarily reducing the hours of work without a corresponding diminution in wages, such as may be dictated by the law of supply and demand, then it seems to me that the real friend of the working man is not his leader who preaches such pernicious doctrines, opposed alike to political economy and common sense, but rather he who bravely warns him of blind leaders of the blind, who, be their motive what it may, are luring him to inevitable and certain disaster. . . . That the unsound and unwise policy pursued by the Trade Unionism of to-day, if persisted in, will result in permanently injuring the trade of the country, I firmly believe. The agitation for the statutory restriction of labour to eight hours, or any number of hours arbitrarily fixed, conflicts with the principle of freedom which we have always, and rightly, regarded with pride; it is repulsive to our inborn feelings, and would make slaves of freemen. . . . No trade Union, Parliament, or Power has a right to restrain the energy or restrict the will of any individual. . . . Would that we could apply to working men the words of Matthew Arnold:—

In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
These attain the mighty life you see.

A mighty life! because free from pernicious limitations, and characterised by the ceaseless concentration of power and energy which constitute the only real high road to success. A mighty life! because inspired by teaching, which is Divine, to work—and work with might—while it is called to-day. When workmen burst the fetters with which Trade Unionism is surely binding them; when they return to the good old days of freedom of contract and earnest work; when they recognise, what is as old as the hills, that 'in all labour there is profit; but the talk of the lips'—of which we hear so much in these later days—'tendeth only to penury;' then—but not till then—may they expect to emerge from the dismal shade of progressive Socialism, and walk in the path of real progress."

J. H. MACVICAR ANDERSON, Esq.
President of the Royal Institution of British Architects.—
The Times, Nov. 8th, 1892.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE LIMITATIONS OF LAW.

THE purpose of this chapter is to show that legislation is powerless to do much for the weal of the working classes, and that consequently it is a vain thing to trust in it. Laws passed by Parliaments are not the only laws, nor are they the most powerful laws, which exist in this world. Moral laws, which are ingrained within the very constitution of things, and written deep down in the nature of man himself, have to be reckoned with. Almost as fundamental in their character, and as certain in their operation and effects, are the social and economic laws which prevail in a highly civilised community, and these have to be reckoned with also. Political Economy, which is now so much derided by flippant and shallow persons, is merely the scientific statement of the results of experience; it is an exposition and classification of what is perceived to be in existence around us. Whatever may be said in its disparagement, it is, in the main, as true in its nature, as imperious in its dictates, as invulnerable in its strength, and as inevitable and unerring in its effects, as the Moral Law itself. If the laws of Parliament come into conflict with these mysterious but mighty laws of Nature, that is to say, laws of God, it is the laws of Parliament which will have to go to the wall. In Sociology and Economics, no less than in Morals, men will find that it is a vain thing to contend against God.

No delusion is more common nowadays than that which supposes that a Legislature, by its vote, can override and counteract the great laws which govern human character and conduct. This delusion permeates Socialistic teaching of all kinds, and traces of it may be found in the utterances and writings of men who would not describe themselves as Socialists, but who have certainly come under the influence of Socialistic heresies. The common people are being taught by "teachers," who are almost as ignorant as them-

selves, to look to the State as much as possible and to themselves as little as possible ; whereas the true teaching is that they should look to their own brains and energy primarily, and to the help of the State only secondarily. As a matter of fact, what the State can do for any man, even at the best, is next to nothing. It is not the function of the State to do things for a man, but only to place him in a position where he can do things for himself.

It is not surprising that working men, under the influence of such teaching as that above referred to, should devoutly believe that their salvation should come by law through the State rather than by liberty without the State. Let us, however, test the matter practically for one moment. What are the things which the working classes most ardently desire at the present moment ? If we may judge from the utterances of those who profess to be their leaders, from the literature which is supposed to give voice to their wants and wishes, and to the demands which are put forward in connection with strikes, the things they most desire to obtain are these three : (1) Higher wages ; (2) Shorter hours ; (3) Some provision for their old age. Now, within proper limits, these demands are reasonable enough, and if, within such limits, the working classes can secure what they ask, well and good. But the question is : By what methods are these things to be obtained ?

Take first the question of wages. Where do wages come from, and of what do they consist ? According to Adam Smith "the funds which are destined to the payment of wages" are of two kinds : first—"The revenue which is over and above what is necessary for maintenance ; and, secondly, the stock which is over and above what is necessary for the employment of their masters." He explains this by stating that a man who has a greater income than is required to maintain his own family employs some of his surplus income in maintaining servants ; and that when an independent workman has a greater stock than is sufficient to purchase the materials of his own work, and to maintain himself till he can dispose of it, he uses the surplus in order to employ journeymen that he may make a profit by their work. The old idea of political economists, that wages are drawn from a fixed fund, is now ridiculed as absurd. But is it absurd ?

It is obvious that a man who has no surplus income cannot employ servants, and that a man who has no surplus stock cannot employ workmen, and these surpluses of income or stock, although they cannot perhaps be regarded as fixed in the sense that they do not fluctuate, are certainly fixed in the sense that they have been appropriated to pay the wages of labour. The employers of the United Kingdom require so much labour during the present year, and in order to pay for that labour they have set apart a certain proportion of their resources, and the portion so set apart may certainly be legitimately regarded as a wages fund. These employers will repeat the same process next year, and so on year by year afterwards.

What proportion of his means an employer shall pay in wages to those who work for him is determined, not by his own caprice or by the demands of the workman, but by the standard of the value of wages which has been fixed by economic laws, which standard is fixed independently of both the individual employer and the individual workman. As Adam Smith says : " The moneyprice of labour is necessarily regulated by two circumstances : the demand for labour and the prices of the necessities and conveniences of life."

It is obvious that the State as such has, and can have, nothing to do with determining how much money employers are to devote to the payment of wages, or with determining the amount of labour which is available to supply the demand for labour, or with determining the price of " the necessities and the conveniences of life." It follows that the State, were it to undertake to decide what wages should be paid to labour, would be stepping out of its legitimate sphere, and acting in an arbitrary manner, and by so acting it would do an infinite amount of mischief which would be compensated by no good effect whatever. A more hare-brained proposition was never made than that wages should be fixed by the State. It is absurdly impracticable, so impracticable indeed as to be a mere chimera. It could never be carried into effect under such conditions as exist in this country, and from that point of view it might be dismissed as the wild dream of a set of fanatics. Nevertheless, as multitudes of working men believe that it is practicable for the State to do this, and intend as far as they

have power to make the State do it, it is necessary to meet it with argument as though it were a rational proposition.

There is nothing new in the suggestion that the State should regulate wages, although some of those who are advocating it speak of it as if it were a heaven-sent revelation. The experiment has been tried in this country as well as in other countries, and it has lamentably failed. To advocate the fixing of wages by the State is not progress; it is plunging back into the darkness of the Middle Ages. In ancient times wages were fixed both by general laws which applied to the whole kingdom and by special orders of the justices in each county. Dr. Burn, who is quoted by Adam Smith as an authority on such matters, says: "By the experience of above 400 years it seems time to lay aside all endeavours to bring under strict regulations what in its own nature seems incapable of minute limitation; for if all persons in the same kind of work were to receive equal wages, there would be no emulation, and no room left for industry or ingenuity." As late as the time of George III., an Act was passed which, under heavy penalties, prohibited all master tailors in London, and within five miles around it, from giving, and also their workmen from accepting, more than 2*s.* 7½*d.* a day, except in the case of a general mourning. Of this Act the workmen complained, not so much with regard to the wages which it enacted they were to receive, as with regard to its effect in placing the incompetent and lazy workman upon an equality with the ablest and most industrious. Singularly enough, however, modern workmen support Trade Unions, although they have precisely the same effect as had the 8th of George III. in placing good and bad workmen upon a common level. It will be seen, therefore, that the experiment of fixing wages by the State has been tried in this country for over 400 years, and, as Adam Smith puts it, "experience seems to show that law can never regulate wages properly, though it has often pretended to do so."

But this is not all. If wages are to be regulated by the State, they can be reduced as well as raised, though the workman, in contemplating the action of the State in this matter, seldom reflects that it would cut two ways. Perhaps modern workmen imagine that they are so omnipotent in

political affairs that they could compel the State to raise wages and prevent it from lowering them; but therein they imagine a vain thing. Again, if the State is to dictate to the capitalist how he is to spend his money, which it would virtually be doing if it told him what amount of wages he has to pay his workmen, why should not the State go further and fix the price of bread, of meat, and of all other articles of food, and of clothing as well? Unless the State did this its work would only be half done, for it is obvious that the value of a man's wages depends upon the quantity of commodities that they will purchase. The purchasing power of a sovereign may be 25 per cent. greater when things are cheap than it is when they are dear. If, therefore, the State is to regulate wages in the interest of the workman, it must also proceed to regulate the price of those goods which the workman requires for himself and his family, so that his wages may go as far as possible. This also has been tried in our own country, for attempts were made to fix the price of provisions and clothing, and thus regulate the profits of merchants and shopkeepers. The Assize of Bread, which was a relic of the ancient usage referred to, existed down to the time of the Georges. And certainly it was quite as sensible a proceeding to fix the price of bread and other provisions as to fix the rate of wages. If it were possible for the latter to be again practised in this country it would almost certainly have to be accompanied by the former, as was the case in ancient times.

The history of those ancient times is fraught with instruction for us who live to-day. However much our environment may differ outwardly from that of our forefathers, we really live under the same moral and economical laws as they did, and the operation of those laws must necessarily produce the same effects now as it did then. Time was—and that not so long ago, measured by the life of the nation—when the labourer had no rights whatever in this country. The most primary and fundamental right of all, namely, personal liberty, was denied to him. He was a slave; at first a slave in the most literal and absolute sense, and afterwards a slave with a modicum of the rights of a free man. In those times the farm labourer and the domestic servant were always, while even the skilled artisan

was sometimes, the absolute property of the master ; they were bought, sold, and let without any regard to their own desire or will, just like an ox or a horse ; they produced nothing whatever for themselves, and their children were born to the same miserable heritage. It took centuries to transform the English slave, the fruit of whose labour was entirely appropriated by his owner, into a free workman, who could freely exchange his labour with capital for his own advantage. During the transition period represented by those centuries the grossest ignorance prevailed on all economical questions, and the most monstrous injustice was continually perpetrated by the strong at the expense of the weak. The great truth that the interests of all classes of producers is essentially one and the same was then but dimly perceived, and the results were that one class would make use of the most unscrupulous and unjust means to benefit itself at the expense of other classes, and that the Legislature exercised an arbitrary power which created a general sense of insecurity, and therefore paralysed the energies of national industry. Labour was not free ; capital was not secure. Security is not only the first right of capital, but it is the one condition which is indispensable to its stability and its fertility ; likewise freedom is not only the primary right of the labourer, but it is the one condition which is essential to the constant exertion and the efficient development of his powers. These two rights, the security of capital and the freedom of industry, will, under righteous laws and conditions, be interchangeable ; the capitalist and the labourer will both meet each other as free men ; and the capitalist will be able to freely exchange his capital for labour, and the workman to freely exchange his labour for capital. Where this equilibrium exists as the result of freedom both the labourer and the capitalist are in possession of their fundamental rights. All the conditions that are necessary to make capital productive and labour efficient are present ; freedom balanced by security will stimulate production to the utmost ; production will lead to accumulation ; and accumulation to exchange. Experience shows that under slavery, when labourers can be deprived of all property in their labour, idleness, ignorance and incompetency abound, and general industry is enfeebled to the

point of paralysis. No man will work willingly when he is to be deprived of the power of disposing of the fruits of his labour at his own will and in his own way ; no man will exert himself to work skilfully when the same scanty pittance is doled out to all, without any regard to the difference in their abilities, their knowledge, and their energy. Under such a condition of things there can be no accumulation on a large scale, no security for what is accumulated, and therefore no real wealth for anybody. Poverty will be the inevitable lot of oppressor and oppressed alike. To violate the freedom of industry is to destroy the security of property. While slavery existed in this country, either in its absolute form or in the more modified form of villeinage, there was no such thing as freedom of exchange between capital and labour. As the necessary results capital accumulated slowly, and labour was unproductive ; the land did not produce the tenth part of a modern crop ; and the country was constantly on the verge of famine.

In order to remedy these evils, which really flowed from laws which were morally unjust, and which, therefore, violated sound economical principles, other unjust laws were passed which merely aggravated these evils instead of removing them. When the woollen manufacture was introduced into England in the reign of Edward III. it was carried on exclusively by foreigners ; but as the trade extended new hands were wanted, and the bondmen of the villages began to run away from their masters and took refuge in the towns. If the slave could conceal himself from the pursuit of his lord for a year and a day he was entitled to his freedom for ever. The desertion of the villages by many of the bondmen emboldened those who remained behind to demand their natural rights. The nobility began to complain that the villeins refused to perform their accustomed services, and that the corn remained uncut upon the ground. In the 25th year of Edward III.'s reign, in 1351, an Act was passed which recognised for the first time the class of free labourers. Not until then was it admitted by English law that a labourer might be a free exchanger. Into his full rights as a free exchanger the labourer did not, however, enter until centuries afterwards. Through centuries of English history men

were compelled to work by law, to continue at work, to receive a fixed price for their work, to remain in one place, and to follow one employment. While such oppressions and restrictions existed the labourer could not be really free; as labour was not free property could not be secure; as property was not secure nor labour free the two could not unite heartily for the purpose of production; and where capital and labour could not cordially co-operate in producing there could be no certain and rapid accumulation of wealth.

In the year 1349 England was ravaged by an awful pestilence, which destroyed the people by multitudes. The result was a scarcity of labour, and in harmony with the natural operation of the great principle of supply and demand, the remaining labourers refused to work unless they were paid at double rates. In 1351 the "Statute of Labourers" was passed to regulate wages. This statute decreed what should be paid to hay makers and reapers and threshers; to carpenters and masons; and tilers and plasterers. If a man could get work at the wages stated he was not allowed to quit his own village, and labourers and artisans who escaped from one district to another were subject to imprisonment. In 1360 the Statute of Labourers was confirmed and new penalties were attached to it, one of which was that workmen who left their homes were to be burned with the letter F in the forehead. While the wages of labour were thus fixed by statute the price of wheat fluctuated in a most extraordinary manner, sometimes being as low as 2s. a quarter and at other times as high as 17. 6s. 8d. In 1376 the House of Commons complained that masters were compelled to give their servants higher wages to prevent them running away, and that the country was covered with *staf-strikers* and *sturdy rogues*, who robbed in every direction. The villages were almost deserted by the labourers fleeing to the towns, where the absurd restrictions of the law were to a great extent evaded, and to prevent the total decay of agriculture labourers were forbidden to move from place to place without letters patent,* and any

* The Statute 5th Elizabeth compelled artificers, under the penalty of the stocks, to assist in getting in the harvest.

labourer who could not produce such a letter was to be put in the stocks and imprisoned. If a boy had been brought up to the plough till he was 12 years of age he was compelled to remain a farm labourer all his life. In 1406 it was enacted that all children of parents who did not possess land should be brought up in the occupation of their parents. It is obvious that where such laws as these prevailed there could be no really productive industry, no accumulation of wealth.

It is found in most departments of human conduct that when one wrong step has been taken it is necessary to take another wrong step in order to repair the consequences of the first one, and that instead of making matters better this second wrong step really makes them worse, and in turn necessitates still other wrong steps being taken. So our legislators found it to be with respect to their attempts to over-ride the laws of Nature by the laws of man. Having decided by Act of Parliament what wages industry was to receive, they next found themselves compelled to determine how the workmen should spend their scanty earnings. In 1363 a statute was passed to compel workmen, and all persons not worth 40s. to wear the coarsest cloth called russet, and to be served once a day with meat, or fish, and the offal of other victuals.* In order to preserve something like a balance between the wages of labour and the prices of provisions, the magistrates were empowered to make proclamation twice a year, according to the price of commodities, how much every workman should receive. Naturally the system did not work well. In 1496 a new Statute of Wages was passed, the preamble of which recited that the former statutes had not been executed because "The remedy by the said statutes is not very perfect." This new statute endeavoured to fix wages by iron-bound rules: a new scale of wages was adopted for all trades; the hours of work and of rest were prescribed and regulated by law; and in order to prevent labour being transferred from one district to another heavy penalties were enforced. A

* In 1461 the King of France issued an ordinance decreeing that good and fat meat should be sold to the rich, while the poor should be allowed to buy only the lean and putrid.

fixed scale of wages necessitated a fixed scale for regulating the prices of provisions. A statute passed in the reign of Henry VIII. says: "That dearth, scarcitie, good cheape, and plentie of cheese, butter, capons, hens, chickens, and other victuals necessary for man's sustenance happeneth, riseth, and chanceth on so many and divers occasions that it is very hard and difficle to put any certain price to any such things."

This seems to show that the blind law-givers of that time were at length beginning to open their eyes to the absurdity and futility of their proceedings. Nevertheless, they went on making new scales, and passing new laws, which, whatever their intention, had the effect of crippling both industry and capital, and thus prevented them from joining hands to produce an abundance which, fairly distributed in the shape of profits and wages, would have contributed to the prosperity of every class in the nation. The justices, upon whom was laid the duty of maintaining a just balance between wages and prices, complained both of the onerous nature of their task and of the impossibility of properly carrying it out. The statute, 5th Elizabeth, acknowledged that these laws "could not be carried in execution without the great grief and burden of the poor labourer and hired man." In 1601 what is known as the Poor Law was passed, and it was passed firstly for the support of the impotent and aged poor, and secondly for the purpose of setting the unemployed labourers to work. The iniquitous laws which have been referred to created a host of paupers, who had to be maintained at the expense of the owners of property. The history of those times impressively illustrates the utter inability of law to properly regulate the wages of labour, the prices of food, or other matters of the like kind; while it also proves that the mere attempt to do these things on the part of the Legislature is the surest way to render labour unproductive and property insecure, and thus to cut the nerves of national industry and dry up the springs of national wealth.

There is nothing new under the sun. The nostrums which are now being proposed by Socialistic demagogues as a cure for the ills of labour have all been proposed before, and tried, and this in our own country: and they have

ignominiously failed. Hundreds of years ago the State tried the experiment of regulating the hours of labour; having intermeddled with the hours of labour it felt constrained to interfere with the wages of labour; having tried to fix the hours and the wages of labour, it proceeded to determine how the labourer was to spend his wages; with what results we have seen. Having been delivered from this Egyptian darkness and oppression by the light of knowledge and the power of truth, it might have been hoped that we had for ever left such folly and tyranny behind us. But lo! the errors of four hundred years ago are now proclaimed to us as heaven-sent truths, and we are exhorted, with a confidence which could only be born of ignorance, to do the very things which our forefathers tried to do and failed to accomplish. Again we hear clamorous voices demanding that Parliament should decide how long men are to work and interfere with the freedom of the workman in various other directions in the most arbitrary manner. It may be taken for granted that if the State does take upon itself to regulate the hours of labour it will find, as it has aforesaid, that it cannot stop here, but must go forward and deal with wages as well. And if the State is again to decide what amount of wages a workman is to receive weekly, what is there to hinder it from again deciding how he is to spend those wages? What is sauce for the capitalist is sauce for the labourer; and if the capitalist is to be compelled to spend his money, not according to his own inclination, but according to the decree of the State, the workman must submit to the same subordination. In that case the State might decide that the 6,500,000 adult males of the working classes, in spending 19s. a year each upon tobacco, are making an unwise and hurtful use of their money, and on that account prohibit them from so spending it in the future. The working class families of this country have each an average income of 93*l.* per annum, and of this they spend 20*l.* on luxuries, and of this 20*l.* about 17*l.* 10*s.* is for intoxicating drink and tobacco alone, including the taxes thereon. While the working classes spend over one-fifth of their incomes on luxuries they spend on the average less than one-tenth of their income, or 8*l.*, on house rent. The State, if it ever came to fix wages, might decide that these

wages should be so spent as to provide 20% for house rent and 8% for luxuries, including beer and tobacco. How would the working man like to have the State intermeddle in his affairs in this way, saying how much he is to receive for his labour, how much he is to pay in rent, how much he is to spend on luxuries and amusements, and what price he is to pay for his bread and bacon, tea and sugar, and all other commodities? The whole thing is preposterously absurd. But it would not be more ridiculous for the State to do the other things here specified than for it to fix the rate of wages. The State, properly understood, has no control whatever over the amount of money which is available for the payment of wages, and the power to increase or decrease that amount is altogether beyond its scope. It follows logically that this domain is one from which the State should be rigorously excluded.

With regard to the question of hours, the working classes of this country would be acting wisely if they agreed to "let well alone." The hours of labour for adult workmen are as short in this country as is consistent either with the continued commercial prosperity of the nation or with the welfare of the working classes themselves. During the last fifty years the hours of labour have been shortened by 20 per cent. (although wages have increased 100 per cent. within the same period), and the average number of hours now worked by our factory population is $56\frac{1}{2}$ per week, while artisans work only 51 hours per week. No reasonable man can say that these hours of labour are excessive. Even those who work $56\frac{1}{2}$ hours per week have 21 hours of actual leisure weekly, besides Sundays, and in addition to this they have a fortnight's holiday per annum. There is no likelihood of the hours of labour being reduced at present. In France and Germany textile factories are running 28 per cent. longer time than our own, and machine factories 15 per cent. longer; in Austria the excess is 18 per cent. for textile factories, and 27 for machine factories; in Russia, 28 to 50 per cent. for textile factories, and 38 per cent. for machine factories; in Switzerland the excess is 18 per cent. and 27 per cent. respectively; in Belgium, 28 per cent. and 20 per cent.; in Italy from 23 to 60 per cent. for textile factories, and 38 per cent. for machine factories; in Holland the

figures are 28 per cent. and 23 per cent. respectively; and even in the United States the hours in textile factories are 8 per cent. more than our own, and in machine factories 15 per cent. more. It is evident, therefore, that on the ground of foreign competition alone we cannot afford any further reduction of hours.

It is urged that it is the duty of the State to make provision for workmen during their disablement by sickness and in their old age. But it is no more the duty of the State to do this than to fix the amount of wages that a man shall receive, or to dictate how he is to spend those wages. The utmost duty that lies upon the State in this direction is to prevent people dying from starvation, when they are ill or too old to work, and this it already does through the operation of the Poor Law. Any provision beyond this should be made by the individual man for himself. It may be said that it is altogether impossible for the average working man to make any provision for the future, but in view of the figures which have been given as to the expenditure of the average working man on beer and tobacco, it will be very difficult to substantiate this statement. In presence of this fact it is childish to tell us that working men cannot provide pensions for themselves, and it is wicked to propose that as they will not make such provision, but spend their money in other ways, it should be made for them at other people's expense through the State. If a man is to have a pension when he reaches a certain age, it is obvious that he can only have it because property has been accumulated on his behalf, upon the returns of which he can live when he is no longer able to work. Whose duty is it to accumulate that property? Clearly it is the duty of the man who is to live upon the property and not of any other being or body whatsoever. Thousands of working men do thus accumulate property, and thereby support themselves in their old age. Hundreds of thousands of working men might do this if they really wished to do it. The State possesses no money except what it takes out of the pockets of the people, and it is out of this that old age pensions would have to come.

Any working man who wishes to provide for himself a pension of 5s. a week after he is 65 has every facility for doing so. All that he has got to do is to save 13d. a week

between the ages of 18 and 25, and invest it at interest in the Post Office Savings Bank. When he is 25 he will be in possession of 20*l.* 11*s.* 8*d.*, and for that sum the Post Office will sell him a deferred annuity of 13*l.*, or 5*s.* a week, to become payable immediately after he reaches the age of sixty-five. There is scarcely a young working man in the kingdom who could not provide for himself a pension in this simple and effectual manner. By paying 9*d.* a week in the case of males, and 10*d.* in the case of females, beginning at 20 years of age, a man and wife might purchase an annuity of 12*l.* a year each on attaining the age of 60, and at the same time assure a sum of 12*l.* in the case of death whenever it might occur. A man of thirty may purchase through the Post Office an annuity of 10*l.*, to commence when he reaches the age of sixty, by paying down a lump sum of 24*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.*, or by an annual payment of 1*l.* 8*s.* 4*d.* till he reaches the age of sixty. A working man who wishes to have independence when he gets old must acquire property. It is nonsense to say that the working man cannot do this in view of the fact that he can afford such an expenditure for luxuries as has been alluded to, and in view of the further fact that thousands of working men, including even agricultural labourers, are actually doing it at the present time. The State cannot make such provision for working men on principles of equity; the only way in which the State could do it would be by devoting property to that object which would be sufficient to cover its cost. Whose property is it which is to be devoted to this purpose? Clearly it is not the property of the people who are to be provided for, for if they possessed this property there would be no need to make provision for them. The property belongs to other people, that is, to employers, capitalists, landlords, and to those among the working classes themselves who have been industrious, temperate, and frugal. This demand that the State should make provision for working people indiscriminately in their old age is essentially Communistic. It means that the property of those who have been diligent, honest, and provident, and who by the use of those qualities have reached a position of comfort or affluence, should be appropriated for the support of those who have not been diligent, or honest, or provident, but who have squandered

the resources which, had they been husbanded, would have sufficed to place them also in a position of comfort and independence. It is of the essence of all Socialistic schemes that they take what belongs to the most reputable members of the community and squander it upon the least reputable. If the proposals which are now being put forward with regard to State provision for old age could be carried out the higher working classes would themselves be the largest sufferers, inasmuch as they would be taxed in order to support those members of their class who degrade it and retard its progress. The working man's worst foes are ever those of his own order—excepting, perhaps, the politicians who wish to climb to power upon his shoulders, and who will therefore delude and exploit him in the most cruel and unscrupulous fashion.

The working man in this country is in the full enjoyment of all his rights as a free exchanger, and these rights are guaranteed to him by the law. No man can be entitled to more than this. Labour, as a property, is entitled to the same protection that Capital is entitled to; that—and no more. The right of a man over his own labour is absolute; no Government or individual has any authority to interfere with it. As an exchanger of labour for capital the labourer ought to be assured that the exchange shall be in all respects as free as the exchanges of any other description of property. Adam Smith says: "The property which every man has in his own labour, as it is the foundation of all other property, so it is the most sacred and inviolable. The patrimony of a poor man lies in the strength and dexterity of his hands; and to hinder him from employing this strength and dexterity in what manner he thinks proper, without injury to his neighbour, is a plain violation of this most sacred property." M. Say, a French economical writer, defines the right of property to be "the exclusive faculty guaranteed to a man or body of men to dispose at their own pleasure of that which belongs to them." The working man therefore should have the right to dispose at his own pleasure of his property—labour. His rights as an exchanger have been defined as follows: "That he shall not be compelled to part with his property by any arbitrary enactments without having as ample an equivalent as the

general laws of exchange will afford him ; that he shall be free to use every just means, either by himself or by union with others, to obtain such an equivalent ; that he shall be at full liberty to offer that property in the best market that he can find, without being limited to any particular market ; that he may give to that property every modification which it is capable of receiving from his own natural or acquired skill without being narrowed to any one form of producing it. In other words, natural justice demands that the working man shall work when he please, and be idle when he please, always providing that if he make a contract to work he shall not violate that engagement by remaining idle ; that no labour shall be forced from him, and no rate of payment for that labour prescribed by statutes or ordinances ; that he shall be free to obtain as high wages as he can possibly get and unite with others to obtain them, always providing that in this union he does not violate that freedom of industry in others which is the foundation of his own attempts to improve his condition ; that he may go from place to place to exchange his labour without being interfered with by corporate rights or monopolies of any sort, whether by masters or workmen ; and that he may turn from one employment to the other if he so think fit, without being confined to the trade he originally learnt, or may strike into any line of employment without having regularly learnt it at all. When the working man has these rights secured to him by the sanction of the laws and the concurrence of the institutions and customs of the country in which he lives he is in the position of a free exchanger. He has the full, uninterrupted, absolute possession of his property. He is upon a perfect legal equality with the capitalist. He may labour cheerfully with the well-founded assurance that his labour will be profitably exchanged for the goods which he desires for the satisfaction of his wants, as far as laws and institutions can so provide. In a word, he may assure himself that if he possesses anything valuable to offer in exchange for capital, capital will not be fenced round with any artificial barriers, or invested with any unnatural preponderance, to prevent the exchange being one of perfect equality, and therefore a real benefit to both exchangers."

This is the position of the working man in this country

to-day. As regards the exercise of his freedom, the security of his property, and the right to dispose of that property in his own way, he is on an absolute equality with the capitalist. Law has virtually done for him all that it can do ; for it has placed him in a position where he is able to make the most of his advantages and opportunities. His further progress must depend upon himself. If he exercise his rights and use his liberties wisely, for the development of his own character and the legitimate pursuit of his own advantage, his position, favourable as it now is, will continue to improve ; but if in his blindness he should so use his opportunities as to injure the interests and restrict the rights of those around him, it is morally certain that the time will come when he will be deprived of much of the freedom and power which he now enjoys. The sad and bitter history of recent strikes, the evidence which they have afforded in regard to the selfishness, the blindness, and the malignity of some among our working men plainly indicate that we have reached a critical point in our industrial history. It has been demonstrated that, whilst working men have the fullest liberty of combination, the liberties of employers and of some working men are continually menaced by those combinations. We have seen thousands of workmen and hundreds of employers deprived of their fundamental right to freely exchange the property which belongs to them. Masters who wished to carry on their business, and workmen who wished to pursue their avocations, were alike hindered from doing so by mob violence and Trade Union tyranny. Such a state of things in a country which glories in being the cradle and the home of liberty is not only an anomaly but an infamy. The tolerance which has been displayed by the police authorities and the Executive Government towards combined ruffianism has constituted nothing less than a betrayal of the essential principles of British law and a crime against the natural and civil rights of British citizens. Judges and magistrates have, in the main, done their duty without fear or favour, and punished lawbreakers according to their deserts ; but no condemnation can be too severe as regards the indifference and inefficiency which have been manifested by the Executive authorities. If a revision and an amendment of the law should be provoked it may be taken

for granted that the law will not be altered entirely in the interests of Trade Unionists. The strong right arm of the law must be strengthened, not weakened. The rights and liberties of an employer of labour or of a non-unionist workman are as sacred and inviolable as those of a Trade Unionist; and when our legislation fails to practically recognise this fact the knell of England's greatness will have been sounded. For England can only remain a great, a free, a progressive, and a prosperous country as long as the poorest and obscurest peasant in his cottage is as fully guaranteed in his rights and liberties as is the proudest of her peers in his palace.

CHAPTER II.

THE RECENT ACTION OF PARLIAMENT ON LABOUR QUESTIONS.

AFTER what was said in the last chapter as to the inability of Parliament to materially change the essential conditions which ultimately determine economic issues it is not necessary to further elaborate the point here. It may, however, be well to state that the one thing which legislation can do, and which it ought to do, with regard to the labouring classes, is to protect the weaker workers, that is women and children, against oppression and violence, and to ensure to workers of every class that their occupation shall, so far as it is possible, be conducted under such conditions, sanitary and otherwise, as will protect their lives and their health. The Factory Acts were passed in the interests of women and children, though they have incidentally had the effect of also fixing the hours of labour worked by adult males. But this effect was undesigned and accidental, for it was no part of the direct purpose of the Acts to prescribe what number of hours men should work. Parliament, in passing the Factory Acts, aimed at nothing beyond protecting women and children from unduly severe labour, and also at protecting men, equally with women and children, against insanitary arrangements and against unprotected machinery which might be dangerous to life and limb.

It might have been supposed that after fifty years of Factory legislation we should have approached somewhere near finality. Yet scarcely a Session of Parliament passes without some new Factory Act (or Acts) being introduced. During the Session of 1891 no less than four such Bills were introduced; two of them, aimed specially at the sweating system, were brought in by Lord Dunraven and Mr. Sydney Buxton; while the other two, which more strictly aimed at regulating labour in factories, were introduced by Sir Henry

James and Mr. Henry Matthews, who was then Home Secretary.

One of the greatest dangers of Parliamentary action with regard to labour questions is that it is apt to rush to extremes. This tendency has strongly manifested itself during the last few sessions, notably in that of 1891 in connection with the Government Factory Bill.* That Bill proposed that the labour of children in factories should commence at the age of ten. An extreme section of the House of Commons, led by Mr. Sydney Buxton, insisted upon the age being raised to eleven, and this was actually carried against the Government. It was also proposed that the earliest age at which work could commence should be thirteen, the main argument of those who took this view being that as the Berlin Conference agreed to this age, and as the British Government was officially represented at this conference it was morally bound to carry out the decision of the conference in this respect. Properly understood, however, the action of the Berlin Conference simply demonstrated that our Government were extremely unwise in having anything at all to do with it, as they thereby restricted their freedom of action. The Lancashire members strongly opposed the raising of the age even to the limit proposed by the Government Bill, and there can be no doubt that they truly represented the preponderating opinion of all classes in our manufacturing districts. It is the duty of a British Government to legislate, not in accordance with the whims of a Conference of *doctrinaires*, whether held at Berlin or elsewhere, but in accordance with the welfare of the people from whom it derives its authority and whose interests it is its first duty to guard. If the working classes wish their children to remain at school till they are thirteen or fourteen years of age they have only to cease spending so large a proportion of their incomes on injurious luxuries, such as drink and tobacco, and devote the money to the purpose of giving their wives and children more leisure; if they were to do this there would be no actual necessity for any child to work before he was thirteen and no necessity for any married woman to work at all.

* And still more in Mr. Asquith's Factory Bill of 1895.

But it is perfectly hopeless to expect that Parliament can do much as regards reducing the amount of child labour and of married female labour in the present condition of affairs. There must be a stupendous moral advance on the part of working men before there can be any marked improvement in relation to these matters, and moral advance does not come by way of Acts of Parliament.

Without dealing with the numerous subsidiary matters which have cropped up in Parliament during the last two or three Sessions (which indeed the exigencies of space will not admit of), attention may be called to the action of Government and of Parliament in appointing the two Commissions of which we have heard so much of late—namely, the Sweating Commission and the Labour Commission. No doubt the motives which led to the appointment of these Commissions were excellent; nevertheless one is constrained to affirm that more harm than good is likely to be the result of their inquiries. That evils exist under what is called the Sweating System there can be no doubt whatever; but it is questionable whether any good result can be obtained by merely calling public attention to these abuses through the Report of the Sweating Commission. If Parliament were prepared to follow up its investigations by issuing Draconian decrees prohibiting the abuses referred to there might be some sense in the action which it has taken. But then this is precisely the thing which Parliament cannot do, and as it cannot do this it might just as well, or better, have done nothing, and have left these abuses to be cured by that alone which is able to cure them, that is a growth in the morality of our people as a whole. It may be said that incalculable good has been done by merely dragging these facts into the light. But this is a very debateable point. Publicity has its drawbacks as well as its advantages. What is called public opinion has no more inherent power to heal these social and moral diseases than has Parliament itself. Where the malady is moral the remedy must be moral also. The Sweating System and its results are due mainly to one master cause, and that is the demand on the part of the public that its commodities shall be cheap, and when the public is unselfish enough to be willing to pay a third or a half more for its commodities in order that those who

produce them may be well paid, then we shall be within sight of the reforms which are desired. Manufacturers and middlemen (commonly called "sweaters") are not responsible for the existence of the Sweating System : they are but the servants of the public, who produce what the public demands, and is willing to pay for ; consequently the really responsible party is this same public. But the general public is a very awkward quantity to deal with, as Parliament and social reformers have found out long ago.

The investigations and reports of the Sweating Commission, although they have not produced a single good result of a definite and tangible character, have certainly done a great deal of harm indirectly. Ben Tillett's evidence before the Sweating Commission was really the germ from which the Dock Strike sprang. The facts disclosed before the Commission have been made a peg by all sorts of political and philanthropic busybodies, who have endeavoured to hang upon them Socialistic proposals of the most pernicious nature.

During the Session of 1891 a Royal Commission was appointed by the Government to inquire into the relations between Capital and Labour. Upon the work of this Commission very great expectations were built in certain quarters ; indeed, its appointment was regarded as marking the opening of a new epoch in the relations between Labour and Capital. Those expectations were of course destined to prove illusory. The publication of the Report of the Commission has effectually disillusioned the public, who now realise that the Commission was practically impotent for every purpose except that of collecting information.

On the whole it would be well for those who are seriously interested in the relations between Capital and Labour, and who desire to see these relations re-adjusted upon a thoroughly equitable basis, not to expect much practical assistance either from Commissions or from Parliament itself. If they do expect much they are doomed to bitter disappointment. Parliament and politicians do not possess the secret of regenerating humanity ; and it is only out of such regeneration that the ideal relations between Capital and Labour can be evolved.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE DEMAND FOR AN EIGHT HOURS DAY, AND ON THE SHORTENING OF THE HOURS OF LABOUR GENERALLY.

ONE of the legal solutions which it is proposed to apply to the labour problem is the enactment of an Eight Hours day for all who work. Those who advocate and demand such a law represent that it would prove almost a panacea for all the ills under which labour groans. Its effect is to be magical. Once we get this law, the unemployed are to cease out of the land; although there is to be less work, that is, less production, there is at the same time to be more wealth; and every class of the community is to have its condition improved simply because those who have to work will do less work than they ever did before. How all this is to come about we are not told. Our Socialistic "reformers" are great adepts at using grandiloquent language, and vague and glittering generalities form the principal part of their stock in trade. They do not condescend to details; they are too cunning for that; for they know that once they got down to details everybody would perceive that their schemes are too flimsy and absurd to admit of sensible men spending a moment's thought upon them. Not one of them has yet deigned to inform a waiting and a wondering world what the Eight Hours day really means, what it involves, and what it excludes. As regards the individual workman, would he be allowed to work exactly eight hours a day at his trade, no more and no less, and would the working of overtime be made a penal offence? If he would not be allowed to work longer at his own trade, would he be allowed to work at any other occupation, say at cultivating his own garden or attending to some business which he carried on independently of his occupation as a workman? Mr. Herbert Gladstone asked some such question as this during the examination of a witness before the Committee on the Hours of Railway

Servants, but it is not recorded that he received any satisfactory answer. With regard to wages, would the workman under an Eight Hours law receive the same wages as he receives now, or would he receive less wages, or more? And how would the employer be affected by an Eight Hours law? Would he be permitted, where it was practicable, say in a cotton or a woollen factory, or in a flour mill or a machine shop, to run his establishment during the whole twenty-four hours, having three separate sets of workmen, working eight hours each at exactly the same rate per hour as he pays his men now? If so, it is obvious that the employer would, if anything, be in a better position than he is in now, since he would run his factory every hour of the day and night, except Sunday, without paying any more wages proportionately than he now pays; while, at the same time a larger number of men could be employed; though, of course, if all our factories and workshops were to work more than double the time that they are now working it would lead to an immense increase in production and a glut in the market, and therefore ultimately to a fall in prices and a reduction in wages.

These questions are asked only by way of illustrating the utter confusion in which the whole subject is left by the wonderful gentlemen who tell us that all wealth is the result of labour, and then tell us in the next breath that the surest way to get more wealth is to have less labour. Nevertheless, the aims of the advocates of an Eight Hours day, although they are not clearly and definitely expressed in plain language, are obvious enough to those who can look underneath the surface. Their first object is to throw dust in the eyes of the public and to lead them off on false issues, so that they may thereby gain something which would never be accorded to them if their real aims were manifest. What they are actually working for is to gain an increase of wages by underhand methods. They wish to earn more money and at the same time to do less work. They would not be content even to take for forty-eight hours' work the money which is now paid to them for fifty-six hours' work. This point was brought out clearly by the deputation which waited upon Mr. John Morley at Newcastle on August 21, 1892. A Mr. John Scott stated on that occasion that the

application of the Eight Hours system would make labour more scarce and therefore increase wages. Mr. Morley, who was anxious to convince the deputation that Parliamentary interference with the hours of labour also involved interference with the wages of labour, asked: "But by an Eight Hours Bill you do expect a rise in wages?" Mr. Scott's answer was: "Most undoubtedly." Mr. Morley rejoined: "Therefore, one of your motives I may take it, for arguing for an Eight Hours Bill is the expectation that it would be a wages Bill as well as an hours Bill, indirectly?" The truth of this was admitted.

Under an Eight Hours law overtime would, of course, commence as soon as the eight hours period was up, and as overtime is paid at higher rates than ordinary time a man who worked ten, eleven, or twelve hours would earn considerably more than he would by working the same number of hours at present, although his work would be worth no more than it is now to his master. Consequently, the master, if he employed several hundred men, would have to pay something like £100 per week (in many cases £200 or £300 a week) in additional wages, although he would get no additional labour for it; in other words, this money, paid for what would then be overtime, would be taken by law out of the employer's pocket and no equivalent would be rendered to him. Professor Case has clearly shown that the demand for an Eight Hours day is inseparably connected with the demand of the Trade Unionists for an amendment of the Conspiracy Law. He points out that if the Law of Conspiracy were amended in the sense desired by Trade Unionists the law would be too weak to protect the freedom of labour; that combinations of Trade Unionists would be able to obtain a monopoly of employment in every district and in almost every business establishment; and that nobody outside the combination would dare to apply for employment, or, that if he did apply, no employer would dare to engage him. Professor Case further shows that as long as the Conspiracy Law is able to effectually protect the freedom of employment hours cannot be shortened without ultimately diminishing wages, inasmuch as more hands would be required, which would increase the cost of production, and thus raise prices. A rise in prices would lead to a

contraction of the demand, and then prices would have to fall again.

It is often represented that Trade Unionists wish to abolish overtime ; but this is in the main an utterly fallacious idea. Whatever Union officials and platform agitators may say the bulk of the working men will insist upon working overtime when they have the opportunity. It is not uncommon for artisans, even when they are members of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, to leave one workshop for another, not because they are going to be paid higher wages or work shorter hours, but because they will be allowed systematically to work overtime. A short time ago a number of men employed on one of our principal railways struck for a reduction of hours. Their demands were granted, and the hours of work reduced. A few weeks later the same men struck again because the manager refused to give them enough overtime employment ; that is to say they virtually struck for longer hours. What they were after all the time was not actually shorter hours but increased wages for about the same time as they had worked formerly. This is a typical instance, and it shows that the movement for shorter hours is really used only to mask a demand for increased wages. Let the Trade Unions who are now agitating for an eight hours law say distinctly that they wish to be paid under the Eight Hours law at the same rate per hour as they are paid now ; that they wish all overtime to be abolished ; and that they think it right for the manufacturer to run his works for sixteen or twenty-four hours per day as he may see fit, using the men in day and night shifts, and then the public will believe that the Eight Hours movement is what it professes to be, namely, a scheme for giving employment to more men, and not an attempt to secure an increase of wages for the men who are employed already. No doubt there are people among us, amounting in the aggregate to a considerable number, who actually desire to shorten the hours of labour to eight hours per day ; but they are in the main Socialists.

When we look deeply enough into this demand that the labour day should be restricted to eight hours we have these two fundamental facts at the bottom of it—first, that the people who make this demand (to put it mildly) have no

relish for labour ; and secondly, that they are dominated by an utter misconception of the true nature of labour. When Darwin was in South America he asked two unemployed cowboys why they did not work. One of them said he was too poor and the other that the days were too long. It is a pity that Darwin did not make this the germ of an Essay on "The Ingenuity of Idleness." A man in whom laziness is inbred will never have any difficulty in finding reasons why he should not work. The distaste for hard work which is gradually taking possession of so many of those who call themselves "the working classes" is one of the most melancholy features of our times.

The misconception which prevails as to the true nature of labour is really at the root of most of our industrial troubles. And this misconception is in its very nature moral. The Creator has ordained that labour shall be the lot of man, and man can no more escape from this necessity than he can elude the law of gravitation. Mr. H. M. Stanley said at Swansea on Oct. 3rd, 1892 : "He had been in every continent, and wherever he went the impression became more fixed that man should work so that he might eat, and the man who transgressed that law should die. No matter how many labour men they got into Parliament, they would never be able to legislate away the necessity for work. Work must be done for good wages if they could be got, for bad wages if they could not, and the sooner working men understood that the sooner the labour difficulty would be got over." In the same speech Mr. Stanley said that what concerned him more than the depression in trade were "the indifference to work, the lassitude, and the languor which he had seen among the working classes. He was told that the Democracy was rising ; it seemed to him that they had the idea that work in a future time would no longer be necessary, but his experience of this world told him that this was wrong."

Yet while labour is a necessity it is also a delight. He who knows not the joy which springs out of honest labour is no true man. The nature of man is wisely adapted to his environment. The earth will yield him but little unless he bestows upon it diligent toil ; but such toil will be rewarded by abundant harvests. And these harvests will be the least

valuable part of the return which the man's labour will bring him; the greater and more valuable part of the reward of labour will be found in the alertness, the strength, the health, and the discipline and development both of mind and body which surely accompany it. Labour properly understood is not a curse but a blessing; it is the sweetener of life, the balm of sorrow, the spring of joy. It is the divinely appointed means by which man wins those external commodities which are necessary to his bodily sustenance; by which he satisfies his innate love of the beautiful; by which he nourishes and cultivates his mental faculties; in a word, by which he greatens all that is noblest in his own nature and mounts God-ward. For God himself is the greatest Worker in His own universe.

All good things in excess become evil things. Labour is no exception. Labour in excess is a dreary and monotonous drudgery, out of which all the brightness and sweetness of true and wisely moderated labour have been crushed. A true labourer is one who finds the keenest enjoyment of life in his labours; a drudge is one for whom even life itself has scarcely any charm. The surest way to blunt the edge of man's natural sensibilities and appetites is to overburden him with severe toil. That which in moderation is the very zest of life is in excess the curse of existence. But what is excessive labour? Some people would think two hours of hard work a day excessive; others would cheerfully work for sixteen hours a day and feel little fatigue. No reasonable man can, looking impartially and dispassionately at the general condition of our working population, say that the bulk of them work too many hours. Socialistic theorists dream of a time when all labour will be practically abolished. Such fanatics must be as blind to the laws of human nature itself as they are to the laws of the universe. The abolition of labour, if it could be accomplished, would turn this world, not into a paradise, but into a purgatory. Some men who are not Socialists seem to have been brought under the spell of Socialistic teaching with regard to this point. The late William Hoyle estimated that the total amount of labour needed to provide for the wants of a human being would be as follows: "Food, half an hour's labour daily; clothing, fifteen minutes daily; houses, &c.,

half an hour's labour;" that is an hour and a quarter's labour per day all told. The estimate proceeds upon the assumption that every member of the community will do his or her share towards producing food, clothing, and dwellings. Such an assumption vitiates the entire proposition and makes it little better than farcical. There has never been a civilised community in which every man and woman did his or her share towards producing the things mentioned; and there never will be such a community. One of the distinctive marks of a civilised society, which perhaps more than anything else differentiates and distinguishes it from a barbarous community, is that it possesses a large number of what political economists call "unproductive labourers," that is, of people who, instead of growing food, spinning clothing, or building houses, are engaged in ministering to the higher needs of civilised man. Clergymen, lawyers, doctors, artists, musicians, authors, actors, and such like persons are not in the conventional sense productive labourers, that is to say, their labour is not spent in producing wealth in the shape of provisions, clothing, machinery, &c. Nevertheless, they perform functions which are in the highest degree important, and they minister to the needs and to the enjoyment of civilised society in ways which make them simply invaluable. Most of the fault which is found by Socialistic and semi-Socialistic "reformers" with the existing condition of things relates, not to the production of wealth, but to its distribution. The mere production of food is a simple matter; the distribution of it would be almost as simple in a community where all the members were manual labourers and nothing more. In a barbarous society all might be in the strict economical sense productive labourers; in a civilised society they never can be. To demand, therefore, that every person shall be in this sense a productive labourer is practically to demand that civilisation itself should be abolished. While man remains what he is, and the principles of civilisation remain what they are, unproductive labourers will remain with us, and political economists will have to reckon with them.

It may be worth while, however, to point out that the so-called unproductive labourers are really the only true producers in the community. What is commonly called,

production is not strictly production at all. The men who are engaged in producing food, clothing, houses, machinery, &c., do not really create anything whatever; they merely change the form and change the place of the things which they handle. Change of form and change of place are the ends of all ordinary human labour; the former being effected by manufacturing processes, and the latter by commercial. "Man cannot create material things. When he is said to produce things he really only produces utilities. In the mental and moral world, indeed, he may produce new ideas. But in the physical world all that he can do is to either re-arrange matter so as to make it more useful, as when he makes a log of wood into a table; or to put it in the way of being made more useful by Nature, as when he puts seed where the forces of Nature will make it burst out into life."* It will be seen, therefore, that the very class who are despised and derided by political economists as non-producers are really the only true producers among us. The poet is the real "maker." The man who writes a great book, giving to the world new ideas, has actually produced something which did not exist before, which is more than can be said of the work of the farmer, the labourer, or the artisan. Yet Political Economy has arbitrarily distinguished the latter classes as productive labourers and the other classes as unproductive labourers. But Political Economy is essentially a materialistic science.

During the last twenty-five years the hours of labour of the working classes have been shortened by at least 20 per cent., and their wages have increased by about 100 per cent., whilst the purchasing power of money remains pretty much the same, so that their condition has improved enormously. This fact is clearly brought out by a Parliamentary Return on the hours of labour which was issued in March, 1891. This return shows that in most occupations the hours of labour have been steadily decreasing, and that nine hours seems to be about the average day except in collieries, where it is much less. Of course there are occupations in which the hours of labour are still too long. Many railway servants, omnibus and tram-car drivers, cabmen, shop

* Professor Marshall, "Principles of Economics," page 116.

assistants, barmen and barmaids, and other classes work several hours per day more than they ought to do. But probably there will never be a time when somebody will not have to work longer than they ought. Indeed, there are some occupations, such as domestic servants for example, where from the nature of the case the hours of labour must always be long.

How are the hours to be reduced in those cases where they are now excessive? Is the matter to be left to the gradual but certain operation of economic laws, or is it to be dealt with in an arbitrary and violent manner by Parliament? That is the question which has to be decided. The bulk of the Trade Unionists, impelled by the Socialistic element among them, are clamouring for the interference of law. Yet the Durham miners, without any such law, have got an Eight Hours' day; in fact they do not work eight hours a day, and their latest demand is that they should not spend more than seven hours a day in the pit. If the Durham miners have secured this without the assistance of Parliament why cannot the other miners of the country do the same? What necessity is there for Mr. Pickard, or any other miners' representative, to bring in an Eight Hours Bill? The London Omnibus men recently secured a reduction of their hours of labour from sixteen to twelve without any assistance from law. It is true they struck before they obtained reduced hours; it is equally true that the concession of a twelve hours' day was granted to them almost before the strike commenced. There is no real need for any legislation at all upon the matter. Education, reformation, elevation—these are the things required and not legislation; in other words, the means to be used for securing a reduction in the hours of labour where they are now excessive should be moral, and not political. The Socialistic Trade Unionists, however, are not content to seek a reduction of hours merely in those occupations where they are still too long; they demand a reduction of hours to eight per day in all trades, although, as we have seen, the hours are moderate and reasonable in nearly all our great industries. That is to say, the Eight Hours agitation is being used by the Socialists as an instrument for accomplishing their ulterior aims.

An Eight Hours law, such as is indicated by the utterances of those who advocate it, would be a piece of odious and intolerable tyranny. Mr. Watson, secretary of the Railway Workers' Union, stated before a Select Committee of the House of Commons a little time ago, that no man should be allowed to earn any money after he had completed his eight hours' labour, however much he might wish to do so, and that if such a man spent any of his leisure time in making shoes for a shop he ought to be punished. Mr. Henry Tait, the General Secretary of the Scottish Railway Servants, and a member of the Labour Commission, said: "I would say that however anxious a man might be to work more than the allotted time he ought not to be allowed to do it. I do not see that a man is to be entitled to work longer than the Act of Parliament fixes." Mr. Harford, Secretary of the Amalgamated Railway Servants of England, has expressed similar views, and holds that penalties should be inflicted upon men who worked more than eight hours. Much more evidence to the same effect has been given before this Committee and the Labour Commission. If an Eight Hours law could be carried in accordance with the views of such men as these, the condition of the working man in this country would be absolute slavery. To talk of his liberty under conditions which would not permit him to earn a penny for himself or his family after his legal eight hours were over, and which would hale him before the magistrates to be fined and imprisoned if he did so work, would be a bitter mockery. Lord Norton said in a letter to the *Times* of May 7, 1892, that "No labourer has ever made a fortune without the use of extra hours of labour," and this is an important truth. Thousands of working men who have been impoverished and forced into debt by reason of illness or misfortune have been able subsequently to retrieve their position by working overtime, which they would not be allowed to do under the tyranny which would impose upon them an Eight Hours day. If such men had not been free to make the best of their time and energies when they had the chance to work and the power to work they could never have recovered themselves, and would have fallen to the lowest social stratum. Moreover, the light of Nature and of Reason is

sufficient to show a man that he should "make hay while the sun shines;" that he should work longer hours when he is young and strong, so that he may have the advantage of shorter hours when he is old and weak; that he should make the best of his opportunities while health is given him so that he may have somewhat to depend upon in sickness; that although he may take things easily in winter, when frost and snow and rain and fog prevent him from building or ploughing, he should make up for this lost time during the golden days of summer; that, in a word, he should work hard and long when the crop is ripe and rich opportunity invites him to an ample reward for his labour. But where political blindness and folly are in the ascendant these rational and common-sense views are thrust into the background.

One fact which is too much overlooked is that the Eight Hours movement is a stratagem of the Socialists, an instrument by which they mean, if possible, to make some advance toward their final aim, which is to nationalise land, capital, and all other means of production. During the discussion which took place at the Trade Union Congress, on September 8, 1892, upon the question of an international reduction of the hours of labour, Mr. C. Fenwick, M.P., the Secretary of the Congress, read a letter which had been addressed to that body by Charles Gorky, President of the Organisation Committee of the International Working Men's Congress for 1893. That letter contained the following sentences: "If nothing else had grown out of recent International Congresses than the great legal Eight Hours movement, their existence would have been justified. You in Great Britain and Ireland, whose immense demonstrations in favour of the legal Eight Hours day in 1890, 1891, and 1892, did so much to force this question to the front, do not need to be told that *these International Eight Hours demonstrations grew out of the International Paris Congress of 1889.*" The significance of this declaration is very great. One might almost affirm it to be obvious, were it not that so much that is significant in relation to these questions appears to be utterly lost upon our politicians, whose aptitude for closing their eyes to unwelcome facts, and ignoring the real drift and trend of the forces with

which they dally, is astounding. It is well, however, to have it placed upon record that the Eight Hours agitation which at present disturbs, and in the near future may dislocate, British industry is in no sense of British origin; that, therefore, it is not in the nature of a remedy which British workmen have been forced to devise for themselves in consequence of any grievances or ills from which they suffer; but that it is purely the outgrowth of international Socialism, which is a fanatical and violent revolutionary movement, aiming at the confiscation of all property, and the suppression of all liberty, and which is essentially opposed to the temper and the institutions of the English people. The Eight Hours movement is simply one of the instruments which Continental Socialism proposes to use in the accomplishment of its aims; by which the workman is to be deprived of his liberty on the one hand and the capitalist of his property on the other hand. Because, in seeking to attain these ends, the Socialists profess that they are going to employ what they call legitimate and constitutional means, the ends themselves are not one whit more virtuous, though many people delude themselves into the belief that they are. It is just as wicked to rob a man through the collective action of his enemies acting in concert at the ballot box as it is for one of those enemies to knock him down on the highway and rifle his pockets. The former course is, if anything, the more wicked of the two, as it is certainly the more cowardly; inasmuch as it does not leave the person attacked so good a chance of defending himself as the latter course would.

There never was a more preposterous idea than that want of employment and the poverty caused thereby can be remedied by the adoption of an Eight Hours day, or in other words that more men can be employed by providing less employment. The proposition carries on its very face evidence of its monstrous absurdity. Let us suppose that the Eight Hours day were adopted to-morrow, and that in consequence of its adoption all unemployed men who are able and willing to work were set to work, and that matters are so nicely adjusted that all working men are actually able to work eight hours per day. How long will it be before the equilibrium is disturbed? In the course of a few years

those who are now boys will have become men, and a new army of labourers will demand admission into the field of labour. It is evident that during the same time some of the old labourers will have died; but it is certain that there will still be a large excess of workmen over the number required to fill these places. How is work to be found for these new men? Clearly by still further reducing the hours. As Mr. Tom Mann puts it: "If as machinery developed, as the means of production proved more perfect, and as society made progress, a surplus population were again created, *the hours of labour would again have to be readjusted, revised, and reduced to the extent necessary to enable everyone to be employed.*"* So we should have to adopt a six hours day in order to prevent another class of unemployed being created. But as population would continue to increase the same difficulty would recur in a few years, and to meet it the hours of labour must be reduced to four. Still population would increase, and the same difficulty would again have to be dealt with in the course of a few more years. Then the hours of labour would be reduced to two. Population would still grow, and new labourers continue to be produced, and the old difficulty would once more have to be faced. Then the hours of labour would have to be reduced to one per day, and finally to no work at all, and thus we are landed in an absurdity, which nevertheless logically follows from the position of those who assume that the adoption of an Eight Hours day would get rid of scarcity of employment and the poverty consequent upon it. We are asked to believe that the country in which least labour is performed will be the wealthiest; that the country in which no labour was performed at all would be a paradise! But there never yet was a country in which man has not lived in obedience to the law that he should earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, that he shall live by his labour; and whatever elevation may await the race by reason of the higher development of civilisation there never will be such a country on this earth.

How would an Eight Hours day affect wages? Either wages would remain the same, or they would be reduced, or

* Evidence before the Labour Commission, November 15, 1892.

they would be increased. If they were reduced, the workman would bear his fair share of the cost of making the change; but it is abundantly clear that the workman has no intention of doing anything of this sort. His fixed idea is that he can, and that he will, get the same wages for eight hours' work as he now gets for ten or twelve. Professor Percy says he does not believe that one miner in a hundred would ask for an Eight Hours day if he believed it meant a reduction in wages, and the same is undoubtedly true of other classes of workmen. But then the workman does not believe this; he is taught not to believe it. If wages were either to remain the same under an Eight Hours law as they are now, or were to be increased, that would mean that somebody had either to pay the same wages for less work or more wages for less work. Who would have to pay this? Clearly the intention is that the employer should pay it. Even Mr. Tom Mann says: "He would grant that the gain of the worker would come from the employer's profits;"* and Mr. Champion intimates that it is "the almost universal belief of the workman that the trade of this country will stand this increase of wages." On what this universal belief is based it is difficult to imagine; for all the facts in the case go to prove that the margin of profit in all industries is so small that a very slight increase in the cost of production would destroy it and lead to these industries being stopped altogether. According to Mr. Giffen, less than one-third of the total wealth produced in the country goes to the capitalist. This is certainly not an exorbitant share, and according to the report of every railway and steamship company, and indeed of almost every other commercial enterprise, the proportion is constantly being lessened.† Mr. Bradlaugh, in his debate with Mr.

* Evidence before the Labour Commission, November 16, 1892.

† "It is, however, right to point out that, while the share of the aggregate wealth produced in the country which now falls to labour is larger than it was twenty years ago, a corresponding diminution has taken place in the share which falls to capital; in other words, that while wages have risen, profits have fallen; and that this is obviously a process which cannot be continued beyond a certain point. This point has, we think, been very nearly, if not quite, attained already. A time may therefore come when capital will lose

Hyndman on the Eight Hours question, proved from the Northumberland and Durham arbitrations for December, 1875, that in consequence of a voluntary reduction of the hours of labour, the cost of production, taken as if at the same rate of wages, has been increased by 21 per cent. Where the cost of production is increased the tendency is to prevent capital being invested or retained in businesses where the margin of profit is already very small, whilst it would be simply fatal to those industries which are struggling for life against keen foreign competition. Among these industries are the textile trades, the cotton trade of Lancashire, and the woollen trade of Yorkshire, which are now beginning to agitate for Eight Hours. In these trades profits are low, because the competition of the whole world has to be faced. If the cost of production were largely increased by the adoption of shorter hours and the maintenance of the same rate of wages these great national industries would dwindle away. This might give satisfaction to Mr. Tom Mann and a few others like him, but what would become of the hundreds of thousands of persons employed in these industries? It will be seen, therefore, that an Eight Hours law, if enacted, would seriously injure our national industries, whilst at the same time the results anticipated from it by the enthusiasts who are striving to force it upon the country could never be realised. A common-sense view of the matter shows at a glance that shorter hours of labour would mean less work; less work would mean less production; less production would mean less wealth; less wealth would mean less capital; less capital would mean less demand for labour. How can such a state of things benefit anybody? It would not benefit anybody, least of all the working man, who besides having his work and his wages reduced, would be subject to coercion and espionage which would be intolerable. To the employer in thousands of cases an Eight Hours Bill would be simply fatal. And what compensating advantages would be gained? The idea that

all inducement to lend itself to the work of production, and if the employer is driven out of the field, the labourer will necessarily suffer with him."—*Report of Commissioners on Depression of Trade.* Clause 83.

the increased leisure acquired by the working classes under an Eight Hours law would be devoted to intellectual pursuits is a beautiful illusion.

Violent interference on the part of Parliament with the natural relations which exist between Labour and Capital, and with the normal operations of economic laws, would disturb and dislocate trade, impair credit, and shake the security of capital to a degree that is almost incalculable; and Parliament, were it to arbitrarily enact an Eight Hours law, would be interfering with natural economic laws and relations, and such interference would probably have the immediate effect of destroying the margin of profit, already greatly reduced, which alone enables our industries to exist. The employer would, if the Socialists who are clamouring for the Eight Hours day got their way, be hit in two ways, as the returns from his fixed capital, his plant, &c., would be decreased, although the charges on this fixed capital remained the same, and he would also have to pay more wages for less work. Under these circumstances the margin of profit would be destroyed and capital would betake itself elsewhere, Factories would be closed; manufactures would diminish; and the supremacy of England as the first industrial nation in the world would pass to some other people more worthy of it. No law can compel capital to remain where it is unable to earn any profit; even if a law could be conceived which would have the effect of retaining capital here under the circumstances supposed, its vitality could not be preserved from decay. Capital which ceases to work profitably soon ceases to be. There is a spiritual element in capital—credit, confidence, an atmosphere in which men breathe comfortably—an environment which gives them a guarantee of security. Once let this spirit—intangible but actual, undefinable but realisable—be affrighted by the rude violence of ignorant politicians, and it will silently and imperceptibly vanish. When it is gone men of business will be conscious that the foundation upon which they have built has been taken from underneath their feet.

If there is any branch of industrial operations where Individualism as opposed to Socialism ought to have full sway it is in regard to the regulation of the hours of labour. Adam Smith says: "The statesman who should attempt to

direct private people in what manner they ought to employ their capital would not only load himself with a most unnecessary attention but assume an authority which could safely be trusted not only to no single person but to no council or senate whatever, and which would nowhere be so dangerous as in the hands of a man who had folly and presumption enough to fancy himself fit to exercise it." These be wise words. Our statesmen would do well to lay them to heart. Alas! We not only have among us numerous individuals who have folly and presumption enough to think themselves fit to exercise such power as this, but we have also public bodies, the London County Council for example, who exhibit the same folly and presumption. The House of Commons itself is not free from this dangerous spirit. Parliament never manifested such an almost ungovernable tendency to thrust its hands into the private affairs of the citizens as it does now; at the same time we have never had a Parliament so ill qualified to deal discreetly with these delicate and complicated matters as the Parliament which the democracy was pleased to give us at the General Election of 1892.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DANGEROUS CONSEQUENCES OF LEGAL INTERFERENCE WITH CONTRACTS, ACCUMULATIONS, AND EXCHANGES.

No branch of human knowledge is more interesting or instructive than that which relates to the commonest things around us—to the Wants of Man and the Means of satisfying them; which classifies and explains the laws which govern the Production, Distribution, and Consumption of those articles which are essential to the subsistence and the comfort of the human race, those articles of utility which are commonly called Wealth; which exhibits the natural operation of the principles which govern the production and distribution of all exchangeable properties and commodities. This science is called Political Economy. It is no part of the object of this work to expound the principles of that science, though in a subsequent chapter some explanation of these principles, and of the modifications which they have recently undergone, will be attempted. Political Economy has gained a bad reputation among the sciences; it is stigmatised as the “dismal science;” and the fashion just now is to depreciate and condemn it. For this, Professors of Political Economy are themselves largely to blame. They have darkened counsel by words without knowledge, and they have overlaid the few great and simple principles of the science with such mountains of technical and irrelevant matter in the shape of exposition and commentary, that they have made it almost impossible for plain men to dig out their meaning, and consequently have discouraged them from giving any serious attention to the science. Nothing more forbidding to intelligent readers could well be imagined than some laboured and abstruse works on Political Economy which might be named. A business man of average capacity would have to read them ten times over and study them for ten years before he could make out their drift and purpose. Such works, however valuable they may

be to students, are of no use whatever to the ordinary man of the world. Yet this is the man who most needs to be educated in regard to these matters. If any class in the community needs to be instructed as to the nature and the working of those great principles with which Political Economy deals, it is the class which lives by its labour, or in other words, those who are commonly called "working men;" and this instruction is more necessary than it was even in former times, simply because these men have now been placed in possession of political powers which make them virtually the masters of our industry and commerce as well as of our Government. These men are sellers of labour; their industry is a purchaseable or exchangeable commodity; and it is regulated by the same laws as every other exchangeable property. What working men most need to be instructed in, therefore, is the application of the universal laws which govern all exchanges to the direction of that particular exchange which they are most interested in carrying forward rapidly, certainly, and uninterruptedly—the exchange of Labour for Capital. Such instruction would save them from most of the errors and dangers into which they are now liable to fall, into which indeed multitudes of them have fallen, to their own great loss and to the detriment of the community.

If Political Economy teaches one thing more clearly than another it is that violent interference with the natural laws which govern the production, distribution, and consumption of commodities, either arbitrarily on the part of a despotic Government or more indirectly and insidiously on the part of a tyrannical Democracy, must be injurious to the true interests of society.

Let us first of all consider the significance of the terms just used. In doing so it will be necessary to go back to first principles. There are three conditions which are absolutely necessary for the production of Utility, which term includes everything that is essential to the support and the comfort, the refinement and the enjoyment, of human life. These three conditions are:—

1. That there shall be Labour;
2. That there shall be Accumulations of former labour, or what is called Capital;

3. That there shall be Exchanges.

Of these three Labour is undoubtedly the first in the order of time, as it is the parent of all wealth. When the first man was placed upon the earth he had a future before him, but no past behind him. There were no storehouses for him to draw from which had been filled by the experience and the labour of men who had lived before him; he stood in the great universe, solitary and naked. It is difficult for us to imagine the absolute helplessness of a human being placed in such a position. We may, however, form some conception of his condition by reflecting upon the state of a man who should be cast upon a desert island without clothes or fire or tools. It is obvious that such a man would be reduced to the most abject and pitiable impotence. Even if he had obtained a high degree of knowledge and skill in a civilised land before he was cast upon this island, it is evident that in his present circumstances this skill and knowledge would not only be of no use to him but would be much worse than useless, because they would compel him to chafe under and kick against the hard necessities of his present condition. His desert island might have a genial climate, be free from ferocious animals, and spontaneously produce fruits of the earth in great abundance. In spite of all this he would be doomed to unremitting toil in order to maintain a bare and miserable existence. Before he could eat a mouthful of food or drink a mouthful of water he must procure them for himself; before he could wear any garment he must make it; before he could have a hut to dwell in he must build it; before he could have a couch to lie upon, any utensils to use, or any furniture, however rude, he must provide them all for himself. If for a day he neglected his labour, or were unable to perform it through illness, he would hunger; if for a few days he would die of starvation. What would be the main cause of this man's helplessness? Clearly this—that he would not be able to take advantage of accumulations of former labour; and without this his own labour could not be put to a profitable use. In such a case as that here imagined the power of labour would be seen in its lowest, that is, in its least productive, condition. It has been said that a man has greater natural wants and fewer natural

means than any other animal. Certainly it is true that he has greater natural wants, but it is taking a low view of his nature to suppose that he has fewer natural means, simply because the reason and understanding which distinguish him from the brute creation constitute the natural means by which Providence designed that he should have dominion over the earth, the sea, and the animal creation. Nevertheless, a man in such a condition as we have supposed, utterly destitute of the means which human reason and intelligence have accumulated around every individual in the social and civilised state, would be much more helpless than even a brute of the forest. Labour, therefore, in itself and of itself, is but a feeble creature; it is not until it calls Capital to its aid that its real strength and greatness are attained. As it has been well put: "In the very outset of the journey Labour doubtless took the lead. In the dim morning of society Labour was up and stirring before Capital was awake. Labour did not then ride; he travelled very slowly on foot through very dirty ways. Capital at length as slowly travelled after through the same mire, but at a humble distance from his parent. But when Capital grew into strength he saw there were other and more agreeable modes of travelling for both than Labour had found out. He procured that fleet and untiring horse Exchange; and when he proposed to Labour that they should mount together he claimed the right, and kept it, for their mutual benefit, of taking the direction of the horse. For this reason, as it appears to us, we are called upon to assign to one of the companions, according to the practice of the old Knights Templars, the privilege of sitting before the other—holding the reins indeed, but in all respects having a community of interests, and an equality of duties as well as rights, with his fellow traveller." The old proverb says: "When two men ride on one horse one man must ride behind." In the case we are considering Capital and Labour are riding on the one horse Exchange. Formerly they were content with their respective positions, Capital sitting in front and holding the reins; but lately they have been in perpetual dispute as to which should take the first place. Such disputes are vain, for the simple reason that they can never change the nature of things, and it is in the nature

of things that Capital should ride in front, determine what road should be taken, supply eyes and brains for the enterprise, and provide sustenance for the journey. From this position Capital can never be deposed. It is well that it cannot, for were it otherwise Labour would be the first to suffer. Capital and Labour are destined to journey together to the end of time, and their journey will be made all the easier and pleasanter if both parties understand and recognise that the first place belongs of right and of necessity to Capital.

Labour, apart from Capital, is, as has been intimated, helplessness itself. In its very lowest condition, without the assistance of any accumulations from former industry it is scarcely possible for it to exist at all, and instances of its existence in this condition are therefore very rare. Ross Cox, a Hudson's Bay trader, got lost in the woods of the North-West of the United States during the early part of the present century. Having fallen asleep in the woods, he missed all traces of the large party with which he was travelling. As the weather was very hot, he had left all his clothes with his horse when he had rambled from his friends. He had nothing to defend himself against the wolves and serpents but a stick; he had nothing of which to make his bed but long grass and rushes; he had nothing to eat but hips and wild cherries. He would undoubtedly have perished if he had not fallen in with some Indians. The condition of this man during this time illustrates the absolute impotence of Labour apart from accumulations of former Labour. The man was strong and healthy, able to work, and indeed possessed of a knowledge of the acquirements of civilised life; but all this availed him nothing in a position where he was not able to avail himself of the aid of Capital.

Peter, the wild boy, who was discovered in Germany about 150 years ago, and afterwards brought to this country, and the Savage of Aveyron, who was discovered about ninety years since in France, were also illustrations of Labour in its lowest condition. But as they were in no sense civilised they could not be conscious of the needs of the civilised man, as Ross Cox would necessarily be; their wants and desires were not raised above those of the brutes. They supplied their wants after the fashion of brutes. Peter, who

was enticed from the woods by the sight of two apples, did not like bread, but he eagerly peeled green sticks and chewed the rind. After he had been in this country some years he was apprehended in Norfolk as a suspicious character and put into prison; the prison by some means took fire, and Peter was found in a corner enjoying the warmth of the flames without any fear. The Savage of Aveyron could use his hands for no other purpose than that of gripping, and his sense of touch was so defective that he could not distinguish a raised surface from a smooth one, or a carving from a painting. These are extraordinary instances. It is hardly possible to find even among savages a human being reduced so low as to be unable to avail himself of the aid of Capital, or the accumulations of former labour.

When a man is able to avail himself of such accumulations his condition, however helpless it may be as compared with the condition of a man in the civilised and social state, is immensely better than it would be were he absolutely without the assistance of former accumulations. A Moskito Indian, who was left by accident on the island of Juan Fernandez, in the year 1681, illustrates the condition of the man who is left upon a desert island without any direct social aid, but who has some help to his labour in consequence of a small accumulation from former industry. This man had nothing with him but his gun and his knife, with a small horn of powder and a few shot. When he had spent his powder he made his knife into a rude saw by notching it, and with this he cut the barrel of his gun into small pieces, with which he made harpoons, lances, hooks, and a long-bladed knife, having first of all procured a fire by means of his gun flint and a piece of the gun barrel. Before he made these instruments he was obliged to live upon seal's flesh, but after he had got them he refused to eat seal any longer because he was able to kill goats and catch fish. He built himself a little house, lined with goats' skins, and lived in a tolerable degree of rude comfort, although he was left alone on an uninhabited island. He had a constant supply of goat's flesh and fish, which he was able to cook; he had a house lined with goats' skins, and bedding of the same material; and he had clothing also made from the

skins of animals. He had no helper, and was totally unable to avail himself of those advantages which surround even the poorest individual in the civilised and social state; yet he had these slight accumulations of former labour, in the shape of the gun, the knife, and the flint which he chanced to have with him when he was left behind, and these, simple as they were, made a marvellous difference in his condition. They enabled him to give to his labour a profitable direction; or, in other words, to give to his natural supplies a utility and a value which they never could have possessed apart from these instruments. No human being could well have less about him in the shape of accumulations from former labour; yet even with these he was able in a very real sense to subdue the powers of nature to himself. To man, if he is to labour profitably, instruments of labour are absolutely essential, simply because he is not provided with natural instruments for securing food as the inferior animals are; in other words, his natural powers must be aided by accumulations from former labour, that is by Capital. This accumulation in some slight degree the Moskito Indian had, and it enabled him to maintain existence in tolerable comfort even amid the severe conditions in which he found himself. Still, the condition of the Moskito Indian was only one degree removed from the lowest and least productive state of labour. It is not enough for a man to labour, or even to labour with the aid of former accumulations; he must go forward to a higher condition still, and become an exchanger as well as a labourer.

This brings us to consider for a moment or two the principle of Exchange. Archbishop Whately has defined man to be "an animal that makes exchanges." No other animal does this. Whatever power of instinct or of reason an insect or a quadruped may possess (and some of them possess such powers in a perfectly marvellous degree), not one of them has any idea of exchanging with its fellow something which it does not want for some other thing which it desires to possess. Even barbarous human beings have very imperfect ideas with regard to Exchange, though all but the very lowest of them have some idea of it. The principle of Exchange can operate fully only where civilisation has attained considerable development; for this prin-

ciple is the beginning and the end of all civilisation on its material side, and indeed may almost be said itself to constitute civilisation. Without it, however much the members of a community might labour, and whatever advantages they might possess by reason of accumulations from former labour, they would always be poor and miserable. Labour is profitable and accumulations valuable only where the principle of Exchange is in free and full operation; in other words where every labourer can be sure of exchanging the surplus of what he produces for those things which are essential to the sustenance and enjoyment of his life. Labour is practically useless apart from Exchange. Without Exchange man would be doomed to constant labour, and yet his accumulations would be so small that he could never rise above a condition of wretchedness; with Exchange he is certain of securing for himself the results of his own labour, and of thus making the best possible provision for his own wants; in short, this principle of exchange makes man the ruler both of himself and of the creation of which he is the head.

Society, whether rude or refined, is a system of exchanges. Every man in it, unless he be an idler, is an exchanger; that is to say, he exchanges the surplus of any commodity which he may produce or possess for some other commodity which he desires. In a rude state of society the exchange is carried on by barter; in a refined state of society the value of the exchange is represented by money. Where money is used the exchange, although not so direct, is incomparably more rapid. Under this system of exchange two persons are benefited, simply because each obtains what he wants, through the store possessed by others of what they do not want. Now, of course, an exchange is in the nature of an agreement, and the very foundation of that agreement is the security of individual property. Where the principle of individual appropriation is not acted upon there can be no exchange; and where there is no exchange there can be no production. No man would labour to cultivate or manufacture anything beyond what he needed to eat and use for himself if the value of what he produced was not secured to him. Before a man can be in a position to exchange he must be in a position to accumulate, and before he can be

in a position to accumulate he must be assured of the secure ownership of what he produces. Where this assurance of security was lacking the strongest would obtain the largest share of everything going, and the prevailing sense of insecurity would inevitably prevent or destroy all accumulation. But where the principle of appropriation is fully acted upon, in other words where every man's property is secure to him against all the world, and where he can be assured of exchanging his surplus commodities for the things which he desires, there production and accumulation will go rapidly forward. Accumulations and exchanges are absolutely dependent upon the principle that there shall be private property, and that private property shall be inviolable. No security, no exchange; no exchange no accumulations; no accumulations, no capital; no capital, no labour; no labour, no production; no production, and the earth would be a desert and a marsh, and mankind a race of savages. Where the principle of appropriation is universally acted upon there will be unlimited exchange; where there is unlimited exchange there will be large accumulations; where there are large accumulations there will be profitable labour; where there is profitable labour there will be large production; where there is large production there will be a social and civilised community; and in such a community, where large accumulations have been stored, the poorest man has a greater certainty of supplying all his wants, and of supplying them with much more ease, than has the richest man in a community which is unsocial and uncivilised, simply because the greater the store the greater is the certainty that the poor man's labour, or in other words his power of adding to that store, will obtain a fair share of what has been gathered together by previous labour. As M. Say, the French economist says: "It is a great misfortune to be poor; but it is a much greater misfortune for the poor man to be surrounded only with other poor like himself." It is the great principle of Exchange which supplies the motive for production and accumulation. Alexander Selkirk, when he was on his desert island, never thought of providing any store beyond what was needed to supply his own personal necessities. He had no motive for such a thought, simply because there were no human beings within his reach with

whom he might exchange his surplus commodities for theirs. So would it be even with a man who lived in a populous country if he were not allowed to securely possess and to freely exchange the surplus of what he produces for the surplus of some other producer. It is easy to see, therefore, that in order to throw back the civilised world into a state of barbarism it is only necessary to abolish private property and freedom of exchange.

The principle of appropriation applies to land in the same way and to the same extent as to other kinds of property, and where there is no appropriation of land to individual owners there can never be anything but imperfect production and partial accumulation. Man never advances from the nomadic or the hunting state into the pastoral and agricultural state until the land of the country has been appropriated to individuals. Indian tribes, even though they have recognised the security of individual property, and also the principle of exchange which rests upon the security of property, have nevertheless remained poor and wretched because the principles of appropriation and exchange operated imperfectly and irregularly, and did not apply to the land. It has been estimated that each Indian required a thousand acres for his maintenance. The supplies of food among them were so scanty that if a large number of them assembled together on hunting expeditions they soon had to disperse in consequence of the failure of food supplies. The land required to maintain one person where it was unenclosed and unappropriated would maintain hundreds after it was enclosed and appropriated. The fact that these Indians laboured without appropriation in this respect prevented their labour from being profitable. They depended upon the spontaneous and chance productions of the soil, instead of cultivating the soil and compelling it to produce; they did not so cultivate and compel it because there was no appropriation of the soil, which is the most efficient natural instrument of production. If they had utilised and directed the productive power of the earth to the growth of food they would have become rich. But they could not have done this without previously appropriating the soil. They had learned the wisdom and necessity of appropriating the spontaneous products of the soil after they had bestowed

labour upon obtaining them ; but this last step towards making their soil productive, namely, the appropriation of that soil, was not taken. Therefore they remained poor. Where there is no property in land there will be no cultivation ; where there is no cultivation there will be no wealth. Some of the Indians carried the principle of appropriation almost to a division of land for each tribe, and sometimes each individual had an allotted hunting ground, which had been appropriated, imperfectly perhaps, by the first comer, whose right had often been contested with violence by later comers ; but still this was enough to show that they had approached the limit which divides the savage from the civilised state. There is no principle which differentiates civilisation from barbarism more markedly than that great principle which considers all capital and all land as appropriated. Where such appropriation does not exist there is no security for individual property ; where there is no security for individual property there is no social improvement ; the principle of exchange cannot operate, and each man must make everything he requires for himself, instead of confining his attention to one thing and exchanging the surplus of that one thing for such other commodities as he requires ; where there is no exchange there is no motive for accumulation, and consequently abject poverty prevails. Under such conditions Labour will always be unproductive. One of the greatest blessings of the civilised state is that it immeasurably increases the power of production. Those who would abolish private property in land, and make its ownership national or municipal instead of individual, would, if they could succeed in carrying out their purpose, effectually put an end to profitable production. Any change in the ownership of land, any holding of it in a common stock or a co-operative partnership, which did not secure to *every man* his fair share of what the partnership produced, would not last a week. Even under such a plan the cultivators of the land would be exchangers amongst themselves, and the principal of individual ownership would still have to be recognised. Every man would have to be guaranteed in the possession of his individual share of the fruits of the enterprise. If this guarantee were withheld he would not produce or accumulate anything beyond what he needed to

consume himself. Whatever devices may be resorted to by politicians in dealing with the land the great principles which we have been discussing will assert themselves. No man will cultivate the land unless the fruits of his labour are assured to him ; he can have no assurance that he will gather these fruits unless the land is appropriated. What is everybody's business is nobody's business ; land which everybody owns will get nobody to cultivate it. To apply the principle of appropriation to other forms of property and to withhold it as regards land would be absurd. Where appropriation is thus limited exchange will be imperfect ; where exchange is imperfect accumulations will be small ; where accumulations are small labour will be unproductive. Credit, which plays so large a part in the transactions of daily life among civilised men, which indeed may be said to be the very foundation of commerce and prosperity, could not exist at all apart from the principle of appropriation. Those tribes which do not desire to "replenish the earth" by cultivation, but seek only to appropriate the means of existence which the earth has spontaneously produced, may labour and exchange, but they will labour and exchange in a way that will not promote the accumulation of wealth, and will therefore remain poor and miserable. "Imperfect appropriation—that is, an appropriation which respects personal wealth, such as the tools and conveniences of an individual, and even secures to him the fruits of the earth when he has gathered them, but which has not reached the last step of a division of land—imperfect appropriation such as this raises up the same invincible obstacles to the production of utility, because with this original defect there must necessarily be unprofitable labour, small accumulation, unlimited exchange."

The great truth which it is desired to enforce in this chapter is that Labour, Accumulation, and Exchange must be allowed to work in harmony with their natural relations and laws, and that attempts to interfere with their normal operations either by legislation or by illegal violence will certainly recoil upon the head of society, and bring in their train a series of heavy misfortunes and disasters. On this point we are not left without experience to guide us ; for unfortunately rulers of nations in the past, acting either from

ignorance or from selfishness, have been but too ready to try experiments in this direction. It is a melancholy reflection that the calamitous results of this experience do not seem to have produced the impression which might have been expected upon the minds of men in the present generation. No doubt this is largely owing to ignorance, and it may be hoped therefore that in proportion as this ignorance is dissipated men will see it to be both wise and safe to act in harmony with economical laws.

In these times we have nothing to fear from the arbitrary action of monarchs. For the Crown does not now conceive it to be its duty or its interest, as it once did, to make war upon capital. The House of Commons has no need now to complain, as it did in the time of King Henry, that the monarch seized upon whatever suited his royal pleasure—food, implements, horses, or anything else in the shape of accumulated labour. In the reign of Henry the Third a statute was passed to remedy excessive distresses, from which it appears that the King's officers were in the habit of seizing farmers' oxen while they were ploughing, and restoring them only after enormous exaction. Lord Bacon tells us that it was a practice of the King's purveyors to extort large sums of money by threatening to cut down favourite trees which grew near mansion houses. Before the Charter of the Forest no man could dig a marl pit on his own ground, lest the king's horses should fall into it when he was hunting. Despotism of this kind would depopulate any country, however fertile, by rendering capital insecure and consequently unproductive. Mr. Fraser, an English traveller, writing of the desolation of some parts of Persia, owing to the exactions of tyrannical rulers, says: "Such is the character of their rulers that the only measure of their demands is the power to extort on the one hand and the ability to give or retain on the other." Labour will never exert itself when it is to be robbed of its accumulated results. Montesquieu lays it down as a maxim that lands are not cultivated in proportion to their fertility but in proportion to their freedom. In the dark ages of England's history the king plundered the capitalists, the capitalists plundered the labourers, and the labourers in turn plundered the capitalists again. Harrison, an old historical writer,

tells us that during the single reign of Henry the Eighth 72,000 thieves were hanged in England. What a lurid light this one fact throws upon the misery of those times ! As the whole of the kingdom did not at that time contain half a million of grown up men one man in ten must have been "devoured and eaten up by the gallows." Amid such universal plunder as then prevailed the insecurity of property was so great that accumulation was rendered almost impossible, and consequently there was little or no production. The laws which were passed in those times of ignorance were as unjust in their effects upon industry and capital as were the arbitrary exactions of the king and his nobles. These laws which, as we have already seen, attempted to regulate everything in connection with labour, food, &c., effectually destroyed the freedom of labour and the security of property, and thus prevented Capital and Labour from cordially uniting their energies in the process of production. It has been said that Louis XIV. of France wasted as much capital and labour by perpetually interfering with the freedom of trade as he did by his ruinous wars. Unquestionably our own Government might, by framing one law which should unsettle the relation subsisting between Capital and Labour, create among capitalists a universal sense of insecurity, and thus do infinitely more mischief than would be done by a war upon the largest scale, however wanton and wicked that war might be. Once convince Capital that it can no longer work with security, and the result would be that the productive energy of the country will instantly slacken and begin to decay ; the fields will become barren ; the towns will lose their inhabitants ; the roads grow impassable through neglect ; the canals would be choked, the railways would be deserted, the rivers would break down their banks, and the sea would make inroads upon the land. England may conceivably become what it was 2000 years ago, a universal marsh, and London may again become what it once was, namely, a wilderness of howling wolves ; and all because the assurance which every man now possesses that he will be allowed to enjoy his own property has been destroyed. For everything which has gone to the raising of England out of the slough in which she existed 2000 years ago, and to the making her what she

is to-day, has been built upon the security of property and the consequent productiveness of Labour. The whole fabric rests upon that simple principle. Destroy that principle, and the fabric will be dissolved in a twentieth part of the time which it has taken to build it.

The despotism of monarchs is a thing of the past in this country. What we have now to fear, as has already been pointed out, is the more terrible despotism of mobs. The pendulum has now swung to the opposite extreme. Parliament is no longer the creature of the monarch, subservient to his imperious will; but it is the creature of the Democracy, and it is subservient to the more imperious will of "the people." Tyranny which is hydra-headed and million-handed is much more difficult to deal with than tyranny which can use only one head and one pair of hands. A monarch who mis-used his power might be deposed from his throne and beheaded; but no such summary measures can be adopted in the case of a tyrannous Democracy. Let us not beguile ourselves with the delusion that because the absolutism of monarchy is over we have therefore nothing to fear as regards the invasion of our liberties and our rights by despotic power; that we are in no danger of suffering from arbitrary and unjust enactments on the part of Parliament. It cannot be too often repeated that the new tyranny is worse than the old; that the tyranny of Collectivism in its various forms of Socialism, Trade Unionism, and over-legislation, is much more to be dreaded than the tyranny of kings and nobles, inasmuch as it is more omnipresent, gripping with its clammy fingers every department and almost every detail of the citizen's life. Despotism of the old order was of a rough and ready character, and was compatible with the enjoyment of a large liberty on the part of a majority of the people, simply because it was impossible that its oppressiveness could be extended to everybody; but despotism of the new style, which uses to accomplish its purpose Acts of Parliament which apply to every citizen in the country, is much more difficult to escape. It were more tolerable for the men who lived under the Henrys and the Charleses than for those who in the near future will (unless things greatly alter) live under the Socialistic demagogue and the Trade Union boss.

In view of what Parliament has done during the last few years it will not do for us to lull ourselves into a false security. No more foolish or iniquitous laws were passed by the British House of Commons in the Middle Ages than those which it has passed recently. These Acts not only violated contracts which had been voluntarily entered into by both parties, but they also interfered with the natural relations which existed between landlord and tenant, between property and industry, and they virtually condemned that individual appropriation of land which lies at the foundation of all wealth, civilisation, and progress. For individual ownership they have substituted dual ownership. Really it would be just as sensible for Parliament to decree that every horse should have two owners as that every piece of agricultural land shall have two owners.

Parliament has interfered during the last few years between Capital and Labour in all sorts of ways. It has adopted a resolution requiring all Government contractors to pay what the Trade Unions are pleased to require as "fair" wages. In adopting such a resolution Parliament has trespassed beyond its proper functions. All that it is entitled to claim from those who contract to do its work is that they will do that work soundly and thoroughly. What arrangements these contractors make with their workmen is no concern of Parliament or anybody else. The workmen are perfectly well able to take care of themselves, and that fact is the surest safeguard against any improper advantage being taken of them by the employer. No Parliament can compel employers to pay their men higher wages than they deserve, or than the conditions of their business will warrant, for any length of time. By improperly interfering in these matters Parliament will harass the employers and make it very difficult for them to conduct their business, and it will also add to the cost of the public work, but this is about all it will be able to do. Lord George Hamilton boasts that, as First Lord of the Admiralty, he had the placing of contracts to the value of something like forty millions of pounds, and that he gave these contracts only "to those who were in the habit of paying fair wages to workmen"; in other words he permitted one of the great spending departments of the Government to be conducted

in obedience to the behests of the Trade Unions. It is difficult to see what a Cabinet Minister, who is the servant of the whole nation and not simply of Trade Unions, can find to be proud of in such a fact as this. Owing to the action which has been taken by Government and Parliament in this matter the pretentiousness and self-importance of Trade Unions have been swelled to a dangerous degree. It is not at all an uncommon thing for the secretary of some obscure Trade Union to write to a Cabinet Minister, and to take him to task because the Government has given contracts to tradesmen against whom the Trade Unionists of the district happen to have a grudge. Such trumpetry proceedings as have occurred frequently of late are altogether beneath the dignity of the British Parliament. Surely if there is any public body in the country which ought to conduct its business on common-sense principles it is the House of Commons!

The Trade Union Congress of 1892 passed resolutions calling upon the Government not to buy its lead pencils for the Civil Service from Bavaria, to exclude foreign pauper labour, and "to prohibit blacklegs from being imported from abroad during strikes and lockouts; and to stamp all goods produced by trade unionists, so that public-spirited persons may not knowingly purchase commodities produced under unfair conditions." But why does the Government buy its pencils from Germany? Simply because they can get a better article for the price than they could obtain in this country. Whose fault is that? It is the fault of the British workman. English artisans are constantly complaining that work which they ought to do is given to workmen abroad, but this is mainly owing to their own conduct. The London Society of Lithographic Printers passed a resolution some time ago expressing regret at "the tendency of the proprietors of illustrated journals to have their chromo-lithographed supplements executed abroad," and urging workmen to "patronise only those journals which are produced in this country." It seems that there are about 8,000 skilled workmen engaged in this industry in Great Britain, besides 16,000 lads. Out of 800 members of the London Society 16 per cent. were then out of employment. In September, 1892, it was stated that the

previous three months had been the worst that English printers had known for many years, as a large amount of book and other work had been sent into the country, the result being that many London compositors were out of work, whilst London firms had run their composing rooms at a serious loss. The litho and colour printing trade was declared to be in a still worse state, loud complaints being made by the men that benevolent and other institutions sent large orders to the continent, where labour is so much cheaper. Even our provincial firms, though their wages are much lower than in London, are finding it impossible to compete with Germany and Holland. If the British workman wants to remedy this state of things let him produce better goods for the same money than the German workman can produce. That would be the common-sense course. But the only idea of the British workman nowadays seems to be that he should be protected at every point by Parliament. Trade Unionists of the new type are the most arrant Protectionists among us where competition with their labour is concerned, although they are the most extreme Free Traders where foreign competition with the British producer is concerned. If the Unionist workman chooses to strike, he thinks that Parliament should not only allow him the privilege of striking, but should also, in order to protect him, deny to his employer the right of engaging other workmen, and deny to other workmen the right of taking the work which he leaves. He has also evidently got the idea into his head that Parliament ought to prohibit the manufacture, or sale, or use of any articles that do not bear the Trade Union stamp, for clearly this is what is indicated by the resolution to which we have just adverted.

This perpetual interference on the part of Parliament in matters affecting labour at the instigation of Socialistic Trades Unionists has done nobody a particle of good, least of all the people in whose interests the action is supposed to have been taken. Mrs. Fawcett felt herself compelled some time ago to protest against schemes of social legislation which, though designed to protect women from over-work, were likely to result in depriving them of their employment altogether. If it be true that the work of many

women is underpaid, it is equally true that it is better for these women to work for low wages than not to be able to work at all. Women are the first to suffer from the schemes of the Trade Unionists, who in their secret hearts look upon women as their rivals, and wish to drive them out of the field. Fear of female competition has much more to do with their "humanitarian" devices than anxiety to prevent women from being overworked. Women can afford to work for less wages than men, because they do not spend a large proportion of their wages in drinking, smoking, and gambling. A deputation of women nail and chain makers waited on Mr. Mathews when he was at the Home Office, to protest against Parliamentary interference with their labour, their contention being that such interference with the labour of adult women would narrow the field of employment for women. They specially objected to a provision in Lord Dunraven's Bill that no girl should work at the nail and chain trade until she was sixteen, on the ground that this would virtually be driving women out of the trade, as the necessary dexterity in the handicraft must be acquired whilst young.

The principal dangers which threaten us in these times, so far as the security of property and the freedom of labour are concerned, arise from Socialism and the Labour movement, which are so intimately related that they may for all practical purposes be regarded as one and the same. This Socialistic spirit is manifesting itself in three forms: first, as Socialism pure and simple; secondly, in the Socialistic developments of the Labour movement; and thirdly, in the Socialistic action of municipal bodies.

As to Socialism pure and simple, but little need now be said. Such Socialism, however, boldly enunciates the principle that accumulation is in itself an evil, a position so preposterous that it is hardly worth while to spend a moment's labour in refuting it. Individual Socialists are not at all averse to accumulating on their own behalf, and it would be possible to name several Socialistic leaders who have a large balance at their bankers. They regard accumulations as an evil only when they are in the possession of others, and they certainly do not show any eagerness to divide their own accumulations with other people. Rousseau

advises Governments not to secure property to its possessors, but to deprive them of all means of accumulating; and the same writer advocated the savage state, in which there should be no property, in preference to the social state which is founded on appropriation. Herein he was consistent, for Socialism would really be a return to barbarism, to the brutality and misery of savagery. Among the brutes each labours to obtain what it desires from sources which are accessible to all, and when it can it plunders the sources of others. Socialism would throw back the race into its primitive degradation, and reduce man almost to the level of the beasts of the forest.

The second form of Socialism, or that which is manifesting itself in and through the Labour movement, is really the most serious danger which confronts us to-day. The working man in this country is, as has already been pointed out, in the condition of a free exchange. The law guarantees to him the absolute possession of his property, that is his labour. In the eye of the law he is on a perfect equality with the capitalist. He is able to work under the stimulus of the assurance that he can exchange his labour for the money of the capitalist on terms of perfect equality, as the capitalist has no advantage, so far as law is concerned, over the labourer, and thus the exchange is made beneficial to both parties so far as laws and institutions can give it this character. The English working man is no longer a slave; he is a free labourer; no labour is forced upon him or from him, and no rate of payment for that labour is prescribed for him by law; he is free to work when he pleases, and be idle when he pleases—provided he breaks no contract by remaining idle; he is free to obtain the highest wages that he can possibly get, and even to unite with his fellows in obtaining these wages, on the condition that he does not by this union destroy that freedom of industry which belongs to others no less than to himself, and without which he could not have taken one step towards improving his own condition. Natural justice can demand no more than this. The working man is in the possession of all the rights to which he can be entitled as an exchanger. The most fundamental of those rights is that he shall not be compelled by arbitrary enactments to part with his

property without having the fullest equivalent which the general laws of exchange will afford him. Having attained this position the English working man ought to be content. Actually, however, he is more discontented than he ever was, and his discontent is mainly due to the action of politicians and demagogues, who wish to use him for their own ends, and whose wiles he is not acute enough to see through. Doctrines are now being taught to working men by Socialistic agitators which are of the most delusive and dangerous character. They are not new doctrines by any means: they have been taught for centuries past, and they have been exploded over and over again; yet they are being taught to-day with more energy than ever. Trade Unionists are asking for Eight Hours Acts, for the abolition of the Common Law of Conspiracy, for the abolition of the doctrine of common employment, and other similar enactments, because if these laws were passed they would, as we have already pointed out, be able to form such powerful combinations against employers that the employers would be absolutely at their mercy. In other words they would be able to take from their employers their capital by a gradual process, and to transfer it to their own possession. This is the purpose which lies at the bottom of all the schemes of Socialistic Trade Unionism.

The time has come to tell English working men, and to tell them with no uncertain voice, that as they have been raised to the position of free exchangers and placed upon a perfect equality with the capitalist, they are morally bound to use their power in harmony with those laws by which exchanges are governed. Once let working men imagine that they can obtain some of the capital of the employer, or all of it, without giving an equivalent in exchange for it, and let them make but one attempt to carry this idea into practice, and the stores which they desire to plunder would vanish as if by magic. They might once divide among themselves the property of the capitalists, but they would never be able to repeat the process, for the simple reason that the capital would never again be produced while this feeling of insecurity existed. The accumulation of property depends upon the principle that property shall be secure; let the security be destroyed and the accumulation will

cease. If the idea now so prevalent among working men, that the capital of the employer can be seized or used without a fair exchange of labour being given in return for it, could be carried into practice the principle of exchange would be destroyed; because it is of the essence of that principle that both exchangers should benefit, whereas in the case supposed the labourer alone would benefit. This would bring all exchanges to an end. Exchange at an end, accumulation would be at an end, because the accumulator would have no security that what he had accumulated would be assured to him. Accumulation being at an end, all labour would be at an end, except what was necessary to provide for the present hour. Society would then and thus be resolved into its primary elements.

The third danger to which we are exposed in these times by reason of Socialism lies in the tendency of public bodies to act in the interests of Trade Unionists at the expense of all other classes. This disposition has been more flagrantly manifested by the London County Council than by any other public body, though some other municipalities have gone a long way in the same direction.

The one broad and palpable result of this intermeddling on the part of Parliament and of municipal bodies between employers and their workmen is that confidence has been shaken. When this takes place, from whatever cause, the immediate effect is that a chill is sent to the very heart of our commercial system, that its vitality is impaired, and that its energies are enfeebled and its activities slackened.

When despotism prevailed in the dark ages of our country's history and rendered property insecure, confidence was shaken and therefore productive energy was suspended, and the people were poor and wretched. If confidence should be again shaken, though by the foolish and arbitrary actions of elected bodies instead of monarchs, the same results will ensue. A sense of insecurity will again lead to a suspension of productive energy, to the cessation of accumulations, to the migration of capital to other countries, and in the end to the idleness and impoverishment of our working classes. Already these results have begun to show themselves in consequence of the treatment to which capital has been subjected in recent years. The Marquis of Salis-

bury, speaking in the House of Lords on January 31, 1893, used these remarkable words : " I believe if it were possible to ensure a large application of capital to the land very many of the effects of agricultural depression might be averted. But in respect of that and of other depression I only entreat your lordships to beware of remedies which affect to deal with depression, and only do so by shaking the belief of men in the sanctity of contracts and the security of property. *What we really suffer under is want of confidence.* I do not say that most of it comes from political causes ; it comes from causes of great variety ; but one of the elements, and one which I fear will last the longest, is the apprehensions which are being caused in the minds of the owners of capital and the owners of property, partly by legislation which has been already adopted, AND VERY MUCH MORE FROM THE DOCTRINES WHICH ARE FREELY PUBLISHED BY ARTIZANS AND THOSE WHO HAVE RULE IN THIS COUNTRY AT THIS TIME. THERE IS NO COUNTRY IN THE WORLD WHERE PROPERTY IS NOW SO INSECURE AGAINST LEGISLATIVE ATTACK AS IT IS IN ENGLAND : and depend up it, you will feel the evil results of such a state of things in a gradual diminution of confidence, and in a gradual withdrawal of capital, producing an aggravation of the depression under which we labour." If all our statesmen would act upon the principles here enunciated we might look to the future with greater confidence than we can do at present.

When Colbert, Prime Minister to Louis XV. of France, asked a committee of merchants what measures Government could adopt to promote the interests of commerce, he was answered in these words : " LET US ALONE, PERMIT US QUIETLY TO MANAGE OUR OWN BUSINESS." Lao-tse, the Eastern sage, says : "The real art of Government consists, so far as possible, in doing nothing ; all the people want (apart from the punishment of crime), and what is best for them, too, IS TO BE LET ALONE." To thus let men alone, at all events where such questions as land and capital and labour are concerned, is the beginning and the end of political wisdom.

If the British working man is not content with his

position as a free exchanger, and with a position of absolute equality with the capitalist before the law; if he is not willing to exchange his labour with the capitalist according to the ordinary laws of exchange, by which both parties are to benefit; if he should make vain attempts to secure the property of the capitalist without giving a proper equivalent for it, in other words by force or fraud, and to that end should use his political power in combination with his fellows in order to check or suspend the natural laws of exchange, and thereby render the use of capital unprofitable to the capitalist—then England's progress will be stayed, she will at once begin to fall backwards, and the glowing hopes of her noblest sons will be doomed to extinction amid the darkness and ruin which must inevitably follow upon the destruction of the security of property, which is the first right, as it is also the first interest, of industry.

CHAPTER V.

MANHOOD, NOT LAW, THE GREAT DESIDERATUM.

WHEN Napoleon was asked by a lady what was the greatest need of France, his reply was—"Mothers, Madam." If a wise man were asked what is the greatest need of England to-day, his reply would be—"Men." The worst blight that can afflict a nation is the decay of its manhood. This blight is now falling upon our country.

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay."

If these oft-quoted lines were meant to convey the idea that the decay of man is a necessary consequence of the accumulation of wealth they are palpably absurd. Men decay, in the sense that their number decreases, not where wealth accumulates but where wealth cannot accumulate; or in other words where production cannot be profitably carried forward by reason of the tyranny of the monarch or the defective administration of the rulers, or where unwise and unjust laws render property insecure. In the case of Ireland we have before our own eyes an example of a nation where men are decaying. They are decaying in the sense that their number is being seriously diminished, so seriously in fact that if the process goes on that country will be depopulated. Ireland could never have been thus depopulated, however, unless Irish manhood had first of all degenerated. Decay of manhood preceded the decay of men. The character of the Irish people is such that any man whose property or business is dependent upon them for a profitable return can have no assurance that he will ever get that return. The instability of the Irish character creates the insecurity of Irish property. To make matters worse in that country, laws have been passed which, as we have already pointed out, have unsettled all the relations which exist between landlord and tenant, between parties who

voluntarily entered into contracts, each for his own advantage, and which have loudly proclaimed to capitalists; "Do not invest your money in Irish land, or even in Irish securities of any kind, for recent legislation proves that you have no guarantee against violent hands being laid upon it any day, either by the populace, or by the Government, or by both." Where such a state of things exists as we now see in Ireland wealth never can accumulate to any very large extent, and men must inevitably decay. The great law is that where property is secure it will grow and fructify, and will produce thirty, sixty, or a hundred-fold; that where it is insecure it cannot grow at all, but must cease to be. Ireland, so far as its Celtic population is concerned, is a nation destitute of the more robust and exalted attributes of manhood, and therefore a continual curse rests upon the country, making it a trouble both to itself and to its neighbours.

In Great Britain we observe a very different state of things. Wealth is accumulating at a rate so vast that nothing like it has ever been seen in the world. In 1870 real and personal property in the United Kingdom was valued at six thousand millions of pounds; while the total income of the United Kingdom was estimated in 1884 to be £1,342,129,500. These figures are so vast that it is almost impossible for the mind to grasp them. No such totals were ever before known in the history of mankind. Alongside of this increase of wealth, and as a necessary consequence of it, we see that the population instead of decreasing is increasing at the rate of 1000 per day. Industry is organised on so gigantic a scale, and at the same time with such perfect skill and efficiency, that it constitutes one of the wonders of the world. Our commerce penetrates to the ends of the earth; our ships traverse every sea; our merchants are in touch with every people that inhabits the globe, savage or civilised. Never since the world began was there a nation which has conducted such vast industries, or which has created wealth at so rapid and so prodigious a rate; which has possessed such a contented and thriving population; or which has carried Christian and civilised enterprise to such perfection.

Even in Great Britain, however, signs of decay are

beginning to manifest themselves. Our wealth is vaster, and our population larger than they ever were before ; but is the average Briton as strong, as robust, as resourceful as he used to be ? Our commerce is greater, but our men are smaller. We have more people, but each one counts for less than was the case in the old time. We have greater institutions than we ever had before ; but home, the first and greatest institution of all, is not the grand training school that it was formerly. Even our physical development as a race is by our vices being checked, and there is a danger of our becoming a stunted and dwarfed people. All this, serious as it is, counts for little in comparison with the graver fact that the intellect of the average citizen is deteriorating, and that his moral fibre is weakening. Rare indeed is it nowadays to meet a man—a true, self-reliant, vigorous and independent man ; a man who knows his duty and means to do it, though a legion of devils oppose him ; a man with Intellect, Will, Conscience all finely developed, alert and strong, and attuned to the deepest harmonies of God's universe. Soon we shall have to say with the prophet : "Run ye to and thro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof *if you can find a man*, if there be any that exerciseth justice, that seeketh the truth (or 'good faith') ; and I will pardon it." Like Diogenes, the Cynic, we shall have to take a lantern and search our highways for a perfect specimen of manhood. When Sir Humphrey Davy was congratulated on the brilliance and splendour of some of his chemical discoveries he replied ; "My greatest discovery was a man." He found Faraday. It is to be feared that the chances of making such discoveries, notwithstanding the veneer and polish given to our modern life by superficial education, will become fewer and fewer. The Englishman of the grand old type is likely to become as extinct as the dodo.

This enfeeblement of the individual man is partly due to civilisation itself. In a civilised community men come to depend more and more upon each other, and less and less upon themselves. What a man would naturally do for himself if he lived apart he almost as naturally expects the community to do for him when he lives in association.

In the course of generations this habit tends to produce a condition of helplessness. Civilisation is as fatal to the robust qualities of manhood as barbarism—perhaps more so. Civilisation in excess tends to become self-destructive. It is only when it is balanced and restrained by great moral principles that it can be preserved in purity and vigour. Civilised man lives in the social state; he depends upon associated action; he has found out the power of mutual help and of combination. This power, used within its legitimate sphere, adds to the power of the individual as well as of the community; but when pushed beyond that sphere it becomes a weakness and a danger to both. The standing temptation of the civilised man is to depend upon the State, or the government which represents the State, for everything; for what it cannot do as well as for what it can do; and the result is that the individual neglects to do what he ought to do for himself, and that as the State cannot do it for him it does not get done at all. We seem to have reached a condition somewhat like this just now. If there is one stream of tendency which is stronger among us than another at the present time it is this disposition to trust in the law and in the State in relation to matters which neither the State nor the law can properly deal with.

It may be thought that the view here taken is too pessimistic. It may be well, therefore, to descend into a little further detail. That the gregariousness of man may be the ruin of the individual is made sufficiently obvious by the recent achievements of Trade Unionism. What have we witnessed during the past two or three years? We have seen hundreds of thousands of British workmen turning against their employers, throwing up their work, and subjecting themselves and their families to suffering and privation amounting almost to starvation, and producing general disturbance and unsettlement in the industrial world. And why? Because they were bidden to do these things by agitators who have constituted themselves their "leaders." No sensible man can for a moment believe that everyone of these men was convinced in his reason and his judgment that the course he was taking was right; that he was acting as an intelligent, rational, and responsible being ought to act. As a matter of fact we know that thousands of the men who

acted in this way did it against their better judgment. Why, then, did they do it at all? Because they had not the manliness and the courage to act upon their own convictions of duty; they were afraid to oppose the wishes and commands of their fellows, though they knew them to be wrong; they lacked moral strength, and therefore they played the coward. It is well-known that soldiers who are over-trained become abjectly and absurdly incapable when deprived of their officers, and it would appear that working-men may be so over-organised that the individual workman may become incapable of standing alone. This is not manhood; it is baby-hood. It seems probable that our Trade Unions will before long be able to announce that they have annihilated the race of working men and have substituted for them a race of working babies. Nothing could more strikingly illustrate the decay of British manhood than the ease with which modern workmen are coerced and intimidated by those who are bent on evil courses. Perhaps the most astonishing feature in connection with recent strikes is that working men, instead of resisting such coercion and intimidation, have yielded to it without an effort. Over and over again we have heard of bodies of men leaving their work at the dictation of gangs of low ruffians, and protesting all the time that they had no fault to find with their employers or their wages, and that they wished to continue their work. Why did they not continue it? Why did they not stand up in defence of their own rights, even to the extent of engaging in a pitched battle if necessary? Why? Because the spirit which animated their fathers has largely died out of them. They have become ignoble, pusillanimous, and craven-hearted. They are no longer men: they are slaves to agitators, Unions, Federations, and all the rest of the evil brood. When thousands of men work or cease to work according to the orders they receive from some demagogue, where is their manhood? Such action would well become a slave plantation, but it is an anomaly and a curse in civilised society.

The scheme for providing pensions by means of State aid for all workmen when they reach old age, which is being promoted by Mr. Chamberlain and other well-intentioned men, and the favour with which that scheme has been

received in certain quarters, are also signs of the decadence of manhood among us. It is no part of the duty of the State to make any such provision for either workmen or professional men, except such provision as it already makes through the Poor law. It has already been shown that if a man is to have a pension when he reaches a certain age he can only have it because property has been accumulated on his behalf, upon the returns of which he can live when he is no longer able to work, and that it is the man's own duty, and not the duty of any other being or body, to accumulate this property. It has also been shown that thousands of working men do thus accumulate property and thereby support themselves in their old age, and that hundreds of thousands of working men might do this if they really wished to do it. With the spread of education and the growth of habits of thrift there is reason to hope that the number of workmen who thus accumulate property will increase every year. But such slow and natural progress as this is too gradual for our go-ahead "reformers." They want to pass a law enacting that the State shall provide every working man (by-the-bye, why working men only?—why not professional men as well?) with a pension in his old age. What would be the result if they could get their law passed? Simply this—that those working men who are now provident would become improvident (for why should they save their money when the State is going to provide for them?); and that those who are now improvident would become more recklessly prodigal than ever. This Socialistic remedy would be worse than the disease which it is meant to cure; our last state would be worse than the first.

The arguments in favour of individual and against State aid with regard to pensions apply with even greater force to the subject of improved dwellings for the working classes. Such dwellings we all desire to see, but it is no part of the business of the Government to provide or to assist in providing them at the public expense. In fact, the Government could not actually do anything effective in this matter, however much it might be disposed to do so, until the mass of the people had made a great advance intellectually and morally, and then there would be no need for the State to do these things for the people, inasmuch as they would do

them for themselves. Mr. Chamberlain, and other politicians like him, in supposing that the condition of the people would be improved by turning the State into a huge building society, imagine a vain thing.

The desire which is now so prevalent among the working classes for external aid, their groping after and their reliance upon the arm of the State, and their consequent failure to use their own brains and their own right hands, is really a form of weakness which is as pitiable as it is perilous. Hitherto in this country we have proceeded upon the principle that adult men can take care of themselves, and that they will both prosper better themselves, and better promote the prosperity of the community, when they are left to do so, and this principle has proved to be a safe and a sound one. Consequently it ought not to be departed from unless the most conclusive reasons can be adduced in favour of that course. No such reasons have been adduced, nor can they be. That is certainly a peculiar kind of progress which would coddle grown-up men as though they were babies, and which assumes that they are incapable of managing the most elementary matters pertaining to their occupations and their interests. Both Parliament and Trade Unions are doing their best to put our workmen into swaddling clothes, and to feed them with legislative pap, instead of allowing them to grow and strengthen in the bracing atmosphere of freedom. It was not in this way that Englishmen were made great in the past; nor can they in this way be made great in the present or the future. This Socialistic sentimentalism, this weak-headed and weak-kneed collectivism, is belittling and enfeebling the individual man. Even the Trade Unionists come cringing to Parliament, and begging it to settle for them how many hours they are to work, thus confessing their own impotency; or, in the words of Mr. Mather, M.P., they ask Parliament to "deprive them of some portion of their free will and independence!" Surely a system which has degraded men to such humiliating weakness is unworthy of the encomiums which are passed upon it by politicians who flatter and fawn upon the electors of the working classes.

What can be more contemptible than to see millions of sane grown-up men asking the State to educate them, to save

them from drink, to protect them against over work ; or, in other words, confessing that of themselves they are incapable of attaining knowledge, of exercising temperance and self-control, or of settling with their employers the conditions of their daily labour. The hypochondriac who has persuaded himself that he cannot walk is just as helpless as though he were paralysed, although his legs are really as good as they ever were. Working men who have persuaded themselves that their condition can never be improved except by State aid, and who therefore neglect to use those powers of self-help with which they are endowed by Providence, are in a condition of helplessness as abject as that of the hypochondriac. In both cases the helplessness is imaginary, not real, and yet it is the more real for being only imaginary. It is certainly more difficult to cure than any actual malady whatever. The inevitable result of this helplessness is despair. The man has omitted to do what he ought to have done to help himself, he thinks that the State cannot help him, and the result is desperation.

If our working men (and other men) are content to subject themselves to this new slavery no power on earth can save them. Men who can manifest so abject a spirit are incapable, as they are unworthy, of being saved. They are fit only to degenerate, decay, and perish.

“ That strong men, whose fate is their own will,
With all the high attainment in their scope
That noblest dreams of good can picture forth—
That these should choose a willing slavery
Near proves them fools unworthy to be free.
For what avails it that the world is fair
With visions of the glory that should be,
If men love blindness rather than the light
Of skies grown golden with a promised dawn ? ”

In the times of the Anglo-Saxons slavery existed in this country. It has been conjectured that the Normans conquered England so easily, and oppressed it so grievously, mainly because the bulk of the English people were slaves. William the Conqueror depopulated the entire country between the Humber and the Tees, swept away 100,000 inhabitants, and converted the district into a dreary desert sixty miles long, which for years remained without houses

or inhabitants. How came he to be able to do this? Because the people were slaves. In the reign of Henry II. the slaves of England were exported in large numbers to Ireland. The civilisation of ancient Rome was based upon slavery, and consequently it was unable to withstand the attacks of barbarous invaders. Rome itself, even in its palmy days, was surrounded by so many thieves that during the insurrection of Cataline they formed a large and important acquisition to his army. Poland is one of the richest corn-growing countries in Europe, and yet it is one of the poorest. Over and over again it has been partitioned by its conquerors. Poland is said to have fallen "without a crime." But it has also been said, and with truth, that the "crime" of Poland was that she allowed her labourers to be enslaved. If Englishmen should allow themselves to be enslaved England will become an easy prey to some mightier nation. Slavery takes many forms, but whatever guise it assumes it is the same in its essence. Its effects are deadly and ruinous. If our working men become the slaves of demagogues, and of the political machines which demagogues know so well how to manipulate, the effects upon our industry and our wealth will be as calamitous as were the effects of slavery in the United States or in our own colonies.

The Duke of Wellington said that the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton. A significant saying! Similarly one may say that the great battle which has to be fought out in the near future between the forces of Socialism and Spoliation on the one hand and the forces of Individualism and Justice on the other hand, will be won in the homes, the schools, and the workshops of our land. It behoves all who have to do with the training of the young to endeavour to imbue their minds with sound and wholesome truths as to the sacredness of individual liberty and the security of individual property.

Lord Brassey said, in moving the address in the House of Lords on Jan. 31, 1893: "It would be fatal to the interests of labour to do anything by meddlesome legislation to weaken the spirit of self-reliance which was a characteristic virtue of the British workman." It has been made abundantly clear in the course of this work that this

vital mistake has been made by our rulers, and that "meddlesome legislation" has already done much, and threatens to do much more, to deprive the British working man of this "characteristic virtue." Until this tendency towards over legislation is checked, and until our workmen revert to the steady self-reliance and the manly independence which have made them what they are, there is not much room for hope as regards the future. It is not more laws that we require but more manhood.

These words of Frederick W. Robertson have an especial application to the point under consideration: "There is a cowardice in this age which is not Christian. We shrink from the consequences of truth. We look round and cling dependently. We ask what men will think—what others will say—whether they will not stare in astonishment. Perhaps they will; but he who is calculating that will accomplish nothing in this life. The Father—the Father who is with us and in us—what does He think? God's work cannot be done without a spirit of independence. A man has got some way in the Christian life when he has learned to say, humbly and yet majestically, 'I DARE TO BE ALONE.'"

"NEVER BE IT OURS

TO SEE THE SUN HOW BRIGHTLY IT WILL SHINE,
AND KNOW THAT NOBLE FEELINGS, MANLY POWERS,
INSTEAD OF GATHERING STRENGTH, MUST DROOP AND PINE;
AND EARTH, WITH ALL HER PLEASANT FRUITS AND FLOWERS,
FADE, AND PARTICIPATE IN MAN'S DECLINE."

BOOK III.

PROPOSED REVOLUTIONARY AND
SOCIALISTIC SOLUTIONS
OF LABOUR PROBLEMS; OR THE
RELATION OF DEMOCRACY TO
LIBERTY AND PROPERTY.

"The verdict of experience, in the imperfect degree of moral cultivation which mankind has yet reached, is that the motive of conscience and that of credit and reputation, even when they are of some strength, are, in the majority of cases, much stronger as restraining than as impelling forces—are more to be depended upon for preventing wrong than for calling forth the fullest energies in the pursuit of ordinary occupations. In the case of most men the only inducement which has been found sufficiently constant and unflagging to overcome the ever-present influence of indolence and love of ease, and induce men to apply themselves unrelaxingly to work for the most part in itself dull and unexciting, is the prospect of bettering their own economic condition and that of their family; and the closer the connection of every increase of exertion with a corresponding increase of its fruits, the more powerful is this motive. To suppose the contrary would be to imply that with men as they now are, duty and honour are more powerful principles of action than personal interest, not solely as to special acts and forbearances respecting which these sentiments have been exceptionally cultivated, but in the regulation of their whole lives; which no one, I suppose, will affirm The question is whether there would be any asylum left for individuality of character; whether public opinion would not be a tyrannical yoke; whether the absolute dependence of each on all, and surveillance of each by all, would not grind all down into a tame uniformity of thoughts, feelings, and actions. This is already one of the glaring evils of the existing state of society; notwithstanding a much greater diversity of education and pursuits, and a much less absolute independence of the individual on the mass, than would exist in the communistic *régime*. No society in which eccentricity is a matter of reproach can be in a wholesome state."

—John Stuart Mill.

CHAPTER I.

THE SOCIALISTIC SPIRIT.

THE spirit which animates Socialism is no new thing. In one form or another it has existed among men ever since the world began. It is a good many centuries since Seneca said : "If two words were not in the world, men would live in concord without any war; these words are 'mine and thine!'"

But in its modern manifestation, in the form which it presents to us, Socialism may be said to be the offspring of the French Revolution; it was a reaction from the galling tyranny and the grievous oppression which prevailed in France at that period.

In that great cataclysm the principles which constituted the basis of society, all ordinary notions concerning the rights of the individual and the functions of the State, the nature of property and of civil society, were thrown into the melting pot; and some of them came out again in very distorted and grotesque shapes. One of the things which came out of that crucible was Socialism as we know it. The French Philosophers, headed by Rousseau, picked these ideas out of the seething pot and hammered them out afresh, giving to some of them very fantastic forms indeed. The brilliant idea of these wise men was that it would be good for civilisation to cease and for mankind to return to the savage, or, as they called it, the natural state, in which primitive equality would reign, and no man would be able to boast of owning the earth or any part of it, while all men would revel in the freedom of gathering the fruits of the earth (when they could find any). Clearly there was no room in this "philosophy" for the idea of property as ordinarily understood. Of that idea these profound thinkers made short work. Rousseau settled the matter by declaring that every man had a natural right to whatever he needed. The fact that he needed it was proof enough that it belonged

to him, and sufficient justification for his taking it. Brissot, another of the school, stated that "exclusive property was theft," both in the natural and civilised states.

Joseph Babœuf, who was guillotined in 1797, has been called "the father of modern Socialism." This man appears to have set himself with all the ardour of a fanatic to systematise and propagate the ideas which Rousseau and Brissot had left floating in society, using for this purpose a journal which he founded. He organised a secret conspiracy, the object of which was to overturn society and the Government, and establish a true democratic republic, in which the State was to be sole proprietor of everything (and everybody), and was to divide all property in equal shares, so that there should be neither rich nor poor, neither high nor low. The "surplus population" (even under Socialism it seems that there are people who are not wanted) was to be "removed," the landlords being the first to go. Evidently some of our latter-day agitators are mere copies of Babœuf.

From France the Socialistic infection quickly spread to Germany, in which country Socialism probably counts more adherents than in any other country of Europe, notwithstanding the fact that the Germans have set a splendid example of self-help to other nations through such movements as the co-operative credit banks founded by Schulze-Delitzsch.

German Socialism is inseparably bound up with the personalities of Ferdinand Lassalle and Karl Marx, who gave it form and expression, and breathed into it their own spirit and life. Both these men were Jews. And here we may pause a moment to consider the remarkable and significant fact that modern Socialism owes its vitality, and almost its very existence, to men of the Hebrew race and faith. The bearing of this fact upon the subject has been commonly overlooked, and yet it goes to the very root and heart of the matter. M. de Laveleye has pointed out two curious facts; one is that the great Socialist leaders have been Jews, and that the Jewish community has always formed very impressionable material for Socialistic agitators to work upon; the other is that it is only in Christian countries that Socialism has been able to gain a foothold.

Lassalle was a disciple of Hegel, as Karl Marx and

Michael Bakunin were also Hegel's disciples, and from this philosopher these men learned much of their erroneous and pestilent teaching. Like some other Socialists, Lassalle was a vain-glorious and effeminate man, fond of luxury and self-indulgence. Despite his vapourings against property and its owners, he was not at all averse to the enjoyment of six hundred pounds a year, which was settled upon him by a lady whose cause he had served. It is surprising how (professionally) sympathetic a man can be towards the poor when he is assured against the possibility of falling into their ranks. Lassalle loved gay society, had a pretty taste in wines, and gave sumptuous and luxurious dinners. How like a Socialist! Heine, who was a friend of his, described him as "a genuine son of the new era, *without even the pretence of modesty or self-denial*, who will assert and enjoy himself in the world of realities." Lassalle was a clever, able, and unscrupulous man; he was also an eloquent, powerful, and popular public speaker, and he has been described as "the orator of Socialism." He taught that all the instruments of production, and everything produced by them, ought to be taken out of the hands of private owners and held in common, and that industry ought in future to be conducted on the collective principle, the whole proceeds of labour going to the working classes. His chief distinction as a Socialist is that he made a strong plea against "the iron economic law of wages," which he denounced on the ground that it robbed the workman of a large share of the product of his labour. Lassalle was powerfully influenced by Fichte. This philosopher taught that every man has a right to live, and therefore to the opportunity to earn a living. Consequently, if a man has no opportunity to earn a living he may, and must, steal; in which case theft is not theft, but is in the nature of reprisal against society, which has failed to secure him the natural right to which he is entitled, viz., the right to life. A man's absolute property is his life, and in order to enjoy that he must live by his labour; if he cannot do that he is no longer under obligation to respect the property of any other man. The State has not secured him his property; why should other people keep theirs? This doctrine appeared in our Police-courts when Henry Bruce broke the windows of Mr.

Benson, the Ludgate-hill jeweller, on the ground that he was starving. It has also been preached incessantly to the "unemployed" upon Tower Hill. There is reason to believe, too, that it has distinctly influenced some of our legislators. Of course it is both false and wicked. A man who cannot work, or get work, has a right to live, truly; we acknowledge that in our Poor-law; but to live as a pauper, and not as a thief. Which is the more degrading? Socialism says that pauperism is.

Lassalle's Socialism was moderate as compared with that of some others. He was not an internationalist, as he believed that the people of each country should settle their own social questions in their own way, and not that the people of various countries should make common cause against authority. Moreover, he was willing to introduce Socialism gradually, by the expedient of forming "Productive Associations," which were to gradually supplant the capitalist and the employer, being aided thereunto by the State. Lassalle, after planning an armed insurrection (for which he was imprisoned), and founding "The Universal German Working Man's Association," died somewhat ignominiously at the age of thirty-nine (1864) as the result of a duel over a love affair. He lies in the Jewish burial ground at Breslau, and over his grave there is the inscription—"Lassalle—Thinker and Fighter." It is not recorded of him that he ever suffered any pangs of remorse on account of his enjoyment of six hundred pounds a year, or that he ever grew weary of it and gave it to the poor.

Marx was a man of a very different type from Lassalle. He has been styled "the father of scientific Socialism," and his work on Capital is spoken of as "the Socialist's Bible." Like Lassalle, he was a Hegelian, and among his friends were Feuerbach, Heine, and Bakunin. He was expelled from Paris, and subsequently from Brussels, on account of the violent and dangerous character of his opinions, and then (as such men usually do) he settled in London (no man can be too dangerous for us here), where he took part in founding the International, which was a revolutionary association, the leaders of which cordially sympathised with the Paris Commune. When this body split up into two sections Marx became the leader of the Centralist

Democratic Socialists, whose leading principle was that under Collectivism one great central authority, armed with the power to enforce its decisions, would be necessary to secure co-operative production. Marx's chief teachings were that capital is created solely by the labourer, and should therefore belong to him alone; that there can be no peace between capital and labour; that the capitalist should be expropriated; and that machinery, and industrial improvements generally, are all against the labourer. Marx died in 1883, leaving as his legacy to mankind a body of Socialistic teaching which abounds in visionary and delusive ideas, and which may be characterised as a monument of misdirected ability and industry.

There are two other Continental Socialists whom it seems necessary to notice briefly, and these are Proudhon and Bakunin. The former is famous—or infamous—for the answer which he gave to the question which formed the title of his first work, "What is Property?" The answer was, "Property is Robbery." Another of his great ideas was that any one man's day's work was equal to any other man's day's work, and that therefore no particular man should get more for his day's work than any other man. He also laid down the Anarchist principle that Government of man by man, in every form, is oppression.

Bakunin has already been mentioned as a friend of Marx. Like Marx and Lassalle, he was a disciple of Hegel—a philosopher who seems to have exerted a most pernicious influence upon a number of able and ardent young men. Bakunin was a Russian, by birth a noble, and by profession an artillery officer. His head seems to have been turned by the study of Hegel, and he left the army and devoted himself to "literature." At Paris he made the acquaintance of Proudhon, whose foolish and destructive views he eagerly imbibed. He was a revolutionist and conspirator of the most violent and dangerous type, and into both Italy and Spain he introduced a peculiarly noxious form of Socialism which is practically identical with Anarchism, and which has borne, and is bearing, deadly fruit in those countries. Bakunin was the active head of the Nihilists, and the Tzar and the chief Russian officials lived in constant dread of the revolutionary movement which he pushed forward with all

the zeal of an apostle. Bakunin was imprisoned for eight years in Saxony, Austria, and Russia for his seditious acts, and was afterwards exiled to Siberia for life. He escaped, however, through the clemency of a relative of his who was then Governor, and came to London (all such men find their way to London), whence he sent to Russia emissaries of the most extreme type.

It will be observed that modern Socialism is essentially different from the Socialism which prevailed in this country during the first half of this century, and which is identified with the names of Robert Owen, Francis Wright, and others. Such Socialists as Owen did not ask the support of the State in carrying out their experiments, but depended upon their own resources and endeavours. These men, however mistaken they might be, were not ignorant demagogues or self-interested agitators, whose chief aim was to gain popularity and power and emoluments for themselves. They were quiet and earnest workers, devoting their money as well as their energy and ability, to the work which they believed it to be their duty and their privilege to do; and they toiled on year after year with great zeal and devotion, facing opposition and obloquy, and entirely at their own cost and risk. It is obvious that Socialistic efforts of that kind, carried out by a few individuals on a small scale, without any agitation or any hysterical appeals to the State for help, were not at all dangerous, especially as the working classes at that time had no direct share in the government of the country. Modern Socialism, so far as its methods are concerned, is the very antithesis of the Socialism of Robert Owen. Some humourist has made one of his characters say: "Now, if I understand correctly, the first principle of Socialism is to divide with your brother man?" To which another character responds: "Then you don't understand correctly, for the first principle of Socialism is to make your brother man divide with you." There is a world of difference between the two views, and it is hardly putting it too strongly to say that the former view represents Owenism, and the latter present-day Socialism. The Owenites were more ready to give than to receive; the Socialists of to-day are eager to take everything and are averse to giving anything. The first principle of

Owenism was voluntarism, the regeneration of society by moral means, without the aid of the State; the first principle of modern Socialism is coercion, the overthrow of existing social order by brute force, either in the form of battalions of voters or of revolutionists. Latter-day Socialism has no idea at all of depending upon itself, or of risking its own resources in order to convince the world of the truth of its doctrine or of the beneficence of its practice. Quite the contrary. Its burning ambition is to seize and exercise the authority of the State in order to secure its own ends. Its modest demand is that all the wealth, land, mines, factories, railways, ships, in short all the resources of the country and all the means of production, should be placed under its control. For arrogance and audacity no man can compare with the modern Socialist. He demands that the existing social order shall be dissolved; that individual proprietary rights shall be abolished; and that all property of every kind shall be owned by the State: he is the enemy of law and government and the foe of all progress; he is opposed to all reform; and he declares his determination to use force, not only in the form of the sword or the rifle, but also in the form of dynamite, in order to overthrow the ruling classes.

If it be thought that the view taken in this work is too gloomy or extreme, we may remind the reader that Professor Fawcett said not long ago at Oxford that if the growth of the Socialistic political vote in Germany and in the United States made as much progress during the next fifty years as it has during the last fifty, capital can do nothing effectual against Socialism. Such an opinion as this is surely entitled to great weight. The fact is that the growth of the Socialistic vote is one of the most ominous signs of our times. Not less ominous is the propaganda of violence which is now openly carried on in this country and in the United States, and in France and Germany. An appeal was recently circulated in Paris which said: "Here is what we propose to all the wretched—to pay nothing, especially to proprietors. We are on this planet to profit by all that is contained within it and upon its surface, by the simple fact that we are its inhabitants. Consequently all the materials which have been employed to construct houses belong to all, and those who

have appropriated a spot of ground to our detriment are thieves. Come, Proletaire, take up your abode in spacious, well-ventilated rooms, instead of remaining in wretched and pestilent holes where you are crushed by privation and unwholesome air. You must dress yourself well and nourish your families. You commit a crime if you bring children into the world and do not fill their bodies in such a way as to make them robust revolutionaries. Why need you care about the price? You will not have to pay a second time what you have paid for the sweat of your brow and your fatigues." An appeal even more inflammatory and immoral than this was circulated broadcast in April, 1891, in the town of Sheffield, by the Sheffield group of Communist Anarchists.

Literature of the most inflammatory description has been for years past disseminated in London and in all our large centres of population, and the infamous propaganda is still being carried on. It is a serious question whether these doctrines of anarchy and plunder and murder ought to be permitted to be freely promulgated, or whether the Government ought not to sternly repress all such incitements to dishonesty and violence. Freedom is all very well, but when it is made a pretext for wanton license it is quite possible to pay too high a price for it. It is absolutely certain that such evil seed cannot be sown without a bitter harvest being subsequently reaped. Much of the industrial trouble that has come upon us of late years has been the direct outgrowth of Socialistic literature and speeches. Any man who should boldly preach sedition and treason would be arrested and punished; but surely it is not less criminal to preach plunder, confiscation, and outrage. It is well that the monarch should be protected on her throne; it is also well that the poor peasant should be protected in his cottage. It is the poor man who will suffer first and suffer longest from the success of Socialism, and for the sake of the poor, even more than for the sake of the rich, the State ought to deal sternly with those who are undermining the very foundations upon which society is built.

Modern Socialism glories in being international; indeed it is as much opposed to the idea of nationality as it is to everything else; it is impossible for Socialism and patriotism to flourish in the same soil. It is continental in

its spirit; its entire genius is antagonistic to the Anglo-Saxon mind. The "Social Democrats," as they call themselves, have derived their very name from Germany; Karl Marx is their prophet; and what they call their "teachings" are nothing more nor less than crude and ill-digested versions of German Socialism. They are violent and vulgar, virulent and vapid, and the marvel is that any man of intelligence can be induced to look with favour for a moment upon the brainless and aimless inanities which they belch forth. Although they call themselves Socialists, they are virtually Communists, and many of them are Anarchists as well. Their fundamental principles are that private property is illegitimate and pernicious, that the State, as representing organised society, should own all wealth, direct all labour, and compel the equal distribution of all produce; in other words, that everything should be held in common; that the State should appropriate the produce of all labour, and should maintain the labourer from the common stock. It is true that there are some Socialists who disavow the name of Communist, and who endeavour to explain Socialism in such a manner as to distinguish it from Communism, but their explanations when carefully examined only make it the more clear that they are to all intents and purposes Communists. Mr. Hyndman says: "Socialism is an endeavour to substitute for the anarchical struggle or fight for existence an organised co-operation for existence." This definition cannot be said to err on the side of lucidity. Ordinary people desire to have the matter explained a little more in detail; but this vulgar desire for fuller information is rebuked by Mr. J. L. Joynes, one of the Socialistic leaders, who says that "no scientific Socialist pretends to have any scheme or detailed plan of organisation."

Similarly Marx, in his work on "*Secret Societies in Switzerland*," says:—"The masses can only be gathered under the flag of negation. When you present detailed plans you excite controversies and sow divisions; you repeat the mistake of the French Socialists, who have scattered their redoubtable forces because they have tried to carry formulated systems. We are content to lay down the foundation of the revolution. We shall have deserved well of it if we stir

hatred and contempt against all existing institutions. We make war against all prevailing ideas of religion, of the State, of country, of patriotism. The idea of God is the keystone of a perverted civilisation. It must be destroyed. The true root of liberty, of equality, of culture, is Atheism. Nothing must restrain the spontaneity of the human mind." Mr. Hyndman further says that the cure for the present evils of capitalistic society is "the collective ownership of land, capital, machinery, and credit by the complete ownership of the people." In the Socialistic state everything is to be owned by everybody; there is to be no individual ownership at all, but only collective ownership; that is to say private property will entirely cease to exist, and Communism will be put in its place.

It will be clear from what has been already stated that the Socialistic spirit is utterly impracticable. The schemes and proposals of the Socialists are so ultra-foolish, so inane, and insane, that they could not be put into practice without throwing society into utter confusion. Indeed, they cannot be put into practice at all, for they are not capable of being reduced to practice. There has never been in all the history of the world a nation which was organised upon such a basis as is proposed by modern Socialists.

Again, the spirit of Socialism is manifestly unjust. No pains need be taken to argue this point; it is self-evident. Men who would deprive every individual of that which is indubitably his own, without giving him any compensation at all for it, are simply thieves and robbers. They are no more entitled to respect than is a garrotter or a burglar. The fact that they propose to do their plundering under some sort of legal disguise does not make it any the less plundering. It is just as criminal to deprive a man of his property by the vote of the majority as it is to knock him down in the street and pick his pockets. The difference is simply one of method; it does not touch the essence of the crime. Socialists, however, as has been already intimated, do not propose to restrict themselves to legal methods; they follow such methods only as long as they are compelled to do so by their fewness and feebleness. With them might is right. Although they are for ever denouncing the capitalistic and

the governing classes on the alleged ground that these classes mis-use their power, they themselves make no secret of their intention to mis-use power even more flagrantly as soon as they get a chance of doing so. Socialism is the rankest and foulest injustice, and can never be other than a loathsome offence to honest men,

Furthermore, the Socialistic spirit is malignant and destructive. Hatred of the rich is the very breath of its life. Envy, perhaps the most fiendish passion that can animate the human breast, which John Stuart Mill characterised as the most anti-social of all the vices, and which is called by Longfellow the "vice of Republics," is the master passion of its being. Although it boasts of its benevolent character, it is really malevolent to its very core. It maintains its existence almost entirely by malignant tirades against the wealthy, and it preys upon the ignorant poor by teaching them that the rich are their natural enemies, and that their lot can never be improved while rich people remain in the world.

The spirit of modern Socialism is forcibly illustrated in the following utterance of Mr. John Burns, which is quoted from the *London Quarterly Review* for April, 1893:—

"The more the workers got, the more they would demand. The driver of a sledge across the Russian steppes was pursued by a pack of hungry wolves. To appease the wolves the driver first tossed them his cap; but this was fruitless. He then threw out his mantle; but the wolves followed fast as ever. Then he gave up his provisions, which effected a momentary diversion; but the wolves were soon again by his side. Then he sacrificed one child, then another, and last of all his wife; but the wolves, after devouring them, seeing the driver and horses in front, kept up the pursuit. In fine, when the horses are devoured, the driver, too, must rejoin his family in the stomachs of the wolves. THE DRIVER IS CAPITAL, THE POSSESSORS; THE WOLVES ARE THE SOCIALISTS; THE ROAD ACROSS THE STEPPES IS THE PATH OF HUMAN PROGRESS; AND THE CAP, THE MANTLE, THE CHILDREN, AND THE WIFE, ABANDONED ONE BY ONE TO THE WOLVES ARE THE CONCESSIONS MADE EVERY DAY BY THE CAPITALISTS TO THE PROLETARIAT—THE REFORMS TO WHICH THEY ARE COMPELLED TO ASSENT, UNDER PAIN OF BEING

THEMSELVES DEVoured. And, sooner or later, unless they are careful, their turn will come. **LITTLE BY LITTLE WE SHALL TAKE ALL:** as soon as we obtain one liberty we shall demand another. *The wolves, the wolves, you know—the wolves behind the sledge."*

The comparison of Socialists with a pack of wolves, howling, ferocious, unappeasable, is a very apt one, though it is a little surprising to find it being drawn by a Socialist, who appears to glory in the fact that he is himself one of the hungry pack. But he certainly ought to know his own disposition. No utterance of Rousseau, or Marx, or Bakunin or Proudhon, could be more bitter or more malignant than this of Mr. John Burns. Listen to it, ponder it, ye capitalists, ye politicians, ye philanthropists, who think to pacify the Labour-Socialists by profit sharing and Boards of Arbitration—to appease the wolves by throwing them your caps and mantles! As they mean to take up all—absolutely all—you possess, would it not be wiser policy to refuse to give them anything, and to compel them, like other people, to be content with their own?

Socialism is as cowardly as it is malignant; for what could be more contemptible in its cowardice than to take advantage of the ignorance of the rude working man, and to poison his mind with wicked and malicious thoughts towards those who have done him no harm, but who have probably done him a great deal of good. Socialism is a destroying blight. As has been shown, it would inaugurate its existence by the destruction of society as it is now organised. In fact, it is a destructive force and nothing else; it is not, and in its nature it cannot be, a constructive force. Destruction is the work of fools and fools alone are fit for such work. Let it be left to the fools. The misfortune is that fools should be so plentiful, and wise men so scarce. It is some compensation, however, to know that one wise man may be a match for a thousand fools. The growth of Socialism, such as it is, has done more perhaps than anything else to justify Carlyle's cynical observation that the inhabitants of this kingdom consist of "wise men and fools—mostly fools."

Finally, the Socialistic spirit is immoral and irreligious. Immoral it must be by reason of its being unrighteous,

apart from anything else whatever. But it is also immoral in a deeper and wider sense. It is opposed to the family, which is the very corner-stone of civilised society, and it is opposed to those virtues which the family institution is eminently calculated to foster. It is opposed to the sanctity of the marriage tie, and it is associated, in the lives of multitudes of its exponents, with free love (properly interpreted free lust) and other such like unnatural and monstrous immoralities. As to its irreligious character, it need only be said that it is in the main atheistic. God—the Bible—the Church of Christ—the Lord's Day and its worship—all these things the average Socialist looks upon as degrading superstitions, fit only for imbeciles. Whilst he is preaching his own imbecilities as regards property, the nature of man, and the proper constitution of society, he looks with scorn upon the men and women who are animated by the pure and mighty spirit of Christ's religion, and who hold, or rather are held by, the faith which has "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

Now it is obvious that an organised Socialistic party, seeking to accomplish such objects as these, constitutes, in a democratic community, a serious danger to the State. It does so for two reasons; first, because it is able to inflame the passions and the prejudices of an ignorant electorate to a very dangerous pitch, by appealing to the most mercenary and sordid motives of the lowest stratum of electors; and, secondly, because it is its avowed purpose to use violent and revolutionary means as soon as it is strong enough to do so, and not to depend upon constitutional methods. Mr. Hyndman says that "force, or fear of force, is unfortunately the only reasoning which can appeal to a dominant estate, or which will even induce them to surrender any portion of their property." Clearly, therefore, the Socialists mean to fight as well as to vote. Probably there are none of them foolish enough to believe that they will ever get a majority of voters to support their mad schemes, but they may be infatuated enough to believe that even a minority of voters

well drilled and armed, might make a very formidable army. Well, it is tolerably certain that there will be some fighting, and some very fierce and obstinate fighting, before this Socialistic demon is laid to rest. It is almost certain that the most bloody and disastrous civil wars ever known in history will take place, both in Europe and in the United States, over this question of property; for the people who now possess wealth are not going to surrender it without a determined struggle. And if we are to have revolutionary war sooner or later, perhaps the sooner the better; for it is absolutely certain that whatever victories the Socialists might gain at the ballot-boxes they would meet with nothing but disaster and annihilation on the open battlefield. However, this is a matter which must be allowed to work up to its consummation according to the laws of its own development. But sagacious men will expect no true peace in the world as long as this demon of Socialism stalks abroad breeding envy and discontent, inflaming the lowest lusts of the lowest men, impelling the wanton and the worthless to better their condition by robbing the industrious and the honest, and thus ensuring perpetual unrest and conflict. The advance of Socialism means war—war to the knife—war without quarter—war of the most horrible nature on the most gigantic scale. Let there be no mistake about this. Unless all human history is a lie, and the accumulated experience of all the generations of mankind a monstrous myth, it is absolutely certain that when you proceed to dispossess men of the property which is legitimately their own they will prepare to defend it with their lives. For that property is not valued merely for its own sake; with it are inseparably bound up the sustenance, the comfort, the interests, the independence of wives and children, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters. All the most sacred, the most mighty, the most permanent passions of the human heart are entwined around property. Touch a man's property, and through that you touch those who are dearer to him than his own life, blood of his blood, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh. Property is glorified by the love which it enshrines. The vulgar, the material-minded, the mean-souled, can see in property nothing but bricks and mortar, fields and trees; but the eyes of love can see in

these things tenderness and beauty indescribable, poetry and music unspeakable. Love will nerve the arms that fight for property; and there is no warrior like Love. Joseph Cook says: "There has never yet been seen in American history a day so red with blood as will be that day when Socialism attempts spoliation here by force of arms." So will it be in England. The grim conflict between Cromwell's Ironsides and the forces of the King, the bloody feuds between the Houses of York and Lancaster, the even more ferocious butcheries which the Catholics and Protestants of Ireland perpetrated upon each other in the name of God, will all pale into insignificance in comparison with the more terrible civil wars which will break out when Socialism makes its spring and with its murderous grip strives to throttle freedom and shed the life-blood of property. Professor Hitchcock has said that Cæsar was Rome's escape from Communism, and when Communism reaches in England or in the United States a similar stage to that which it reached in Rome, Cæsars will appear in those countries too. In other words, the abuse of democratic dowers by a democratic community will render necessary a military despotism as the only salvation of society.

CHAPTER II.

SOCIALISTIC DREAMERS AND THEIR DELUSIONS.

It is no doubt true that "practical" men are too much inclined to treat students and thinkers with contempt, and to conclude that only men of their own type exert any real and lasting influence upon life and conduct. The truth, of course, is just the opposite. The mighty forces which rule the world, the deep currents which vitalise the minds and fertilise the works of men, are generated, not in the noisy exchanges and markets where "practical" men congregate, but in the quiet and detached study of the philosopher. Dreamers, of a certain kind, rule the world. The qualification is essential. Not all dreamers are seers or prophets; some are simply fools or maniacs. How are we to distinguish between the two types? By this infallible test—Which dreams in accordance with truth and reason? The one who does that is the sent of God. The dreaming which is Divinely inspired is nothing more nor less than exalted and glorified thinking on the highest themes; it is always calm, gentle, sane; it never degenerates into violence, or irrationality, or fanaticism.

Jesus Christ was a dreamer; Paul and Peter and John, His chiefest Apostles, were dreamers; but millions of men are to-day inspired and sustained by the truths they taught. And why? Because they were the depositaries of a new Divine revelation. Martin Luther, the solitary monk of Erfurt, was a dreamer; but the outcome of his dreams was a movement which shook the Papacy to its foundations and profoundly modified the course of human history. And why? Because he had resuscitated the vital doctrine of "Justification by Faith," which had lain for ages buried under the gross errors of Romanism. John Bunyan was a dreamer; but his dreams have afforded instruction, edification, and comfort to millions of delighted readers. And why? Because he set forth old truths under new forms.

John Wesley dreamed, and the Methodist movement, which was merely a revival of primitive truth, took form. All these dreamers will stand the test; their utterances were in accordance with truth and reason.

Dreamers of another order stand upon a somewhat lower plane, and deal with material things. Galileo dreamed, and though ignorant men put him to death for his heresy, his views on the solar system are now everywhere accepted. Columbus dreamed, and the New World was discovered. Isaac Newton dreamed, and the discovery of the law of gravitation was the result. Benjamin Franklin dreamed, and electricity was brought to light. James Watt dreamed, and lo! the steam engine. George Stephenson dreamed, and behold the railway systems of the world. Humphrey Davey dreamed, and myriads of miners are now able to pursue their occupation in safety. Some dreamer discovered the mariner's compass, with the result that the sea can be traversed with almost as much certainty and safety as the land. All these are examples of the immense superiority of the man of thought over the man of action; all are illustrations of the cardinal fact that the mightiest men, even amongst thinkers, are those whose thoughts issue from the fountain of reason and truth.

But what of truth and reason do we find amid the utterances of the dreamers of Socialism? Who among them can compare with any one of the men above named? Which of them has carried human thought to a higher level or revealed to men a nobler way of life? Rousseau? Or Karl Marx? Or Lassalle? Or Saint-Simon? Or Fourier? Or Proudhon? Let the utterances which we have quoted from these men give the answer. Such teaching as theirs bears no mark of celestial origin. No: Socialism has no seer, no prophet, no dreamer inspired and equipped by God: it is of the earth earthy; it is from below, and not from above, as certain even of its own teachers have perceived, for they have unblushingly advocated it as a means of returning to the savage state. Obviously, therefore, its adoption in practice would give mankind a set-back all round.

We have used the phrase "its adoption in practice." But the truth is that there is no possibility of reducing

Socialism to practice. Hitherto the impracticable nature of Socialism has been referred to in the course of this work only incidentally; the time has now come to examine carefully and thoroughly the delusive character of Socialistic schemes. First of all let us remind ourselves of the nature of the leading proposals which are set forth in the Socialistic programme which is now being advocated in Europe and in the United States. They may be summarised as follows :—

1. Abolition of private property in, and the nationalisation of, land.

2. Abolition of private property in general, and the nationalisation of all means of production, such as factories, machinery, railways, etc.

3. Abolition of the right of inheritance.

4. Abolition of the wages system.

5. Abolition of the competitive system generally.

6. A graduated income tax.

1. The demand that the land should be nationalised is in no sense a new one, for in some form or other it has been advocated by certain obscure writers for centuries; but it has undoubtedly received an immense impetus in this country from the publication of Mr. Henry George's attractive, but delusive, work, "Progress and Poverty." Thousands of intelligent and amiable men, who are incapable of deep or sustained thinking, have in a vague kind of way accepted Mr. George's nostrum for curing all the ills of society. But if one of those excellent gentlemen were asked to define what nationalising the land means, by what methods it is to be accomplished, and above all, what the inevitable results of nationalising the land would be, he would be entirely unable to give any satisfactory answer to these questions. All that he knows about it, good, simple man, is that certain things are wrong in connection with the land system; that certain landlords are no better than they ought to be, and are inclined to treat their tenants unmercifully and harshly; that some tenants, and these among the most honourable and skilful, have been ruined by the arbitrary and ruthless exactions of bad landlords; and that certain fortunate owners of land have been enormously enriched by the growth of immense

populations upon or near their estates. He further has a hazy notion that every human being has some sort of proprietary right in the soil, in virtue of the fact that the Creator made him and placed him upon this earth, and that therefore this said human being ought somewhere to have a bit of land to which he has an indubitable natural right. It never seems to occur to this simple-minded land nationaliser that the same process of reasoning may be applied to everything else in the world as well as the land. For example, if a man is entitled to own some piece of land, upon which he has not laboured, and for which he has not paid, simply because he is a human being placed in this world by the Almighty, it follows that on the same principles of reasoning this human being is equally entitled to food and clothing for which he has not laboured or paid; and if all the food or clothing which are within his reach have been previously appropriated by others who have worked and paid for them, why then food and clothing must be nationalised in order that this particular individual may come to possess his natural and legitimate share of them. But our land nationaliser would meet this kind of argument by another of his favourite doctrines, which is that there is a fundamental and an essential distinction betwixt property in land and all other forms of property, a doctrine in support of which not one sound and invulnerable argument can be adduced. Fundamentally, there is no distinction whatever between land and beds of coal or nitrate or deposits of guano; between land or diamond or ruby or gold mines; or even between land and manufactured goods. The materials out of which all things are made either for man's subsistence or comfort come out of the earth, the bountiful mother, and through her they are given to us by God. Man can create nothing at all; with all his skill and energy he can but change the form and the place of the materials which he finds ready to his hand. All inventive, manufacturing, commercial processes and movements resolve themselves into just that—fashioning old things anew and transporting them from one place to another. The writer, when walking or riding through the principal streets of London, the wealthiest city in the world, and gazing upon the wonderful variety of commodities

stored in the shops—provisions, clothes, furniture, jewellery, toys, china, &c., has often reflected that all these things, and also the buildings which contain them, have alike come out of the earth. Land is the gift of God! Yes: but so is gold and silver, iron and lead, wood and stone, wool and cotton, and a thousand other things which man needs every day; and just as these raw metals and material must have applied to them the skill and labour of man before they can be fashioned into the articles needed for the use or convenience or pleasure of mankind, so must land be brought under culture before it can be made to produce the fruits and the crops required for human sustenance. Of what value is land, at all events in civilised countries, except where human labour has vitalised and transformed it? What good is a field unenclosed, unfenced, undrained, uncultivated, unfertilised? Practically, it is worthless. It follows, therefore, that land is made valuable by the labour which has been put into it. Landowners and their agents have recently stated before the Royal Commission on Agriculture and elsewhere that within a comparatively short time scores of thousands of pounds have been spent upon the improvement of particular estates. This process has been going on for centuries in old countries; every owner or occupier of the land has done something to make it better than he found it; besides which the man who originally reclaimed the land has frequently spent from ten to thirty pounds per acre in doing so. Clearly, therefore, the land has become something quite different from what it was at first. Hundreds and thousands of men have been engaged in great processes of agricultural manufacture; they have been making *land*, just as truly as other men have been making cloth, or calico, or machinery; and therefore there is just as truly property in the one product as in the others. In each case the raw material was given by God through Nature; in each case human labour gave to the raw material new form and quality; and consequently in each case the labourer has property in that upon which he has expended his skill and energy. What would be thought of a man who should say that there can be no individual ownership of clothes or carpets, because wool is the gift of God? Or that no man can hold property in household furniture because wood and

leather and horsehair are the gifts of God? The absurdity of such raving—one cannot call it reasoning—is apparent in relation to these things; if the absurdity is less apparent, it is no less real, with reference to land.

The nationalisation of the land is a Socialistic proposal; indeed, it is the fundamental measure of Socialism. Upon this foundation all Socialistic schemes are built. Mr. Henry George denies that his proposed method of dealing with the land is Socialistic, and in 1877 his party expelled all avowed Socialists from its ranks. But this farcical proceeding can deceive nobody. If land nationalisation means anything at all it means Socialism as applied to the land. Mr. George is at great pains to show that the abolition of private property in land is entirely different from the abolition of private property in any other form of wealth. He cannot be congratulated upon his success in making this distinction clear to ordinary minds. To the average man it is self-evident that to abolish property, and enact that land shall be held only in common is both Socialistic and Communistic; and it is equally obvious that if Socialism were ever powerful enough to deal with the land in this way, it would immediately proceed to deal in the same way with other kinds of property.

John Stuart Mill, who, although he has generally been regarded as an orthodox economist, was a propagator of Socialism, and who is perhaps more to blame than any other English writer for the Socialistic troubles which have now come upon us, was in a certain sense a land nationaliser. His proposal was to confiscate the unearned increment, or that increase in the value of land which comes of itself, so to speak, without any effort or expenditure on the part of the owner; and he would allow the landlord fair compensation for the improvements which he had made.

Henry George, however, and other teachers of extreme doctrines on this subject, will hear nothing of compensation to landlords in any shape. Their contention, to put it in its most simple and naked form, is that the beggar in the street has as much right to the estates of the Duke of Bedford as that nobleman has himself, and that therefore part of the land should be given to the beggar without any compensation to the Duke. Men of this school hold that a landlord

stands on the same level morally as a burglar : that what he possesses has been stolen from others ; and that consequently he should be compelled to give it up without recompense. There can be no doubt that the majority of Socialists belong to this extreme school of land nationalisers. They would vote to-morrow for the most gigantic act of robbery that has ever been perpetrated in human history, and, so perverted and corrupt are their views, that they would pride themselves on having done a virtuous act. Even our Trade Union Congress, which is supposed to represent the upper working classes of Great Britain, has more than once voted enthusiastically in favour of land stealing by Act of Parliament.

If it be admitted for the sake of argument that Socialism will not proceed by confiscatory methods, but will endeavour to honestly purchase the land at the prices ruling in the market, then, however much we may respect the honesty of Socialists, we shall have to admit that they are guilty of the most egregious folly. Suppose we admit that the Socialists honestly desire to pay for the land, and that they make an attempt to carry out land nationalisation on this basis. It is estimated that the value of all the land and houses in the United Kingdom, exclusive of mines and railways, is at least forty-five hundreds of millions of pounds. Professor Fawcett, who gives this estimate, calculates that the annual interest on the same, at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., would be more than two hundred millions of pounds, or more than double our national revenue. This is for land alone. If railways, mines, buildings, machinery, and other means of producing wealth were to be purchased as well, they would cost at least as much as the land. Here, then, we have another forty-five hundred millions of pounds, with interest thereupon of two hundred millions per annum, so that it would require ninety hundreds of millions of capital to buy the land and the other means of production, and after that amount had been expended there would be four hundred millions of pounds to be raised every year in the shape of interest. How is this money to be raised ? By means of a graduated income tax, according to the Socialistic wise-acres, which would simply be another method of robbing the industrious, the thrifty, and the prosperous, and of providing for the ne'er-

do-weels of society at their expense. In the United States there are over 2,300,000,000 of acres of land, and the marketable value of this land is estimated to be, on the average, a dollar an acre. Consequently it would require 2,300,000,000 of dollars to purchase it. If this sum could be borrowed by the State at the very lowest rate the annual interest upon it would be greater than the whole national revenue of the United States. If all other means of production in that country were also to be purchased another 2,300,000,000 of dollars would be required, and a similar amount would have to be raised every year in order to pay the interest upon it. Even supposing that these enormous sums could be raised, and the interest upon them be met, there are other more general objections to this method of dealing with property which are even more serious. It is sufficient for the present purpose to show that the men who talk so glibly about nationalising land are mere visionaries, and that their schemes will not stand a moment's vigorous investigation at the hands of practical men. If the Socialists elect to proceed upon the principle of forcibly dispossessing every proprietor of the property which he now owns, then they must be pronounced thieves and plunderers; if they elect to proceed upon the method of purchasing all property at a fair market price, then they must be pronounced fools and blunderers. Mr. Gladstone was right when he pronounced land nationalisation to be either a folly or a crime. There is no third alternative. And what a farce it is to talk about "the State" paying, when it must raise the money by taxing those who are to be paid!

Enough has been said to show that land nationalisation is nothing more than a dream and a delusion; that it is too immoral ever to be adopted by an honest nation, and too absurd to ever be seriously entertained by a sensible one. It is demonstrable that until the principle of individual appropriation of land takes root among a people they can never take even the first step towards a true civilisation. If a society could be constituted on the semi-Socialistic basis proposed by Mr. Henry George, *i.e.*, where every kind of property could be appropriated except land, that society would be afflicted with so capital a defect that it would be doomed to abide in the hunting, nomadic, half-savage state.

No tribe or nation ever passes out of that state into the pastoral and domestic state until it has learned to establish and to respect the principle of private property in land. That principle is the very foundation stone upon which civilisation is built. For without it there can be no cultivation of the land, or in other words no production, since nobody will cultivate land which belongs to everybody; without production there can be no accumulation; without accumulation there can be no capital; without capital there can be no profitable labour; without such labour human beings cannot subsist in comfort, happiness, and prosperity. The land is our greatest and most efficient instrument of production, and where its productiveness is not called forth by the action of the powerful and beneficent law of individual appropriation, there poverty and misery must prevail. Fundamental laws must be accepted in their entirety if full advantage is to be reaped from them. This law is no exception. Only where private property, in land and all things else, exists, and is regarded as inviolable, can production and accumulation go forward, and commodities be freely distributed through the operation of the principle of exchange. No private property, no security; no security, no production; no production, no accumulations; no accumulations, no exchange; no exchange or accumulations, no capital; no capital, no labour; no labour, or production, and the earth would again become a desert and a marsh, and mankind a race of savages.

An exaggerated conception of the burdensomeness of rent appears to have generated many of these absurd notions as to the nationalisation of land. The fact is that rent, viewed as a charge upon land, is so insignificant when compared with other charges as to appear positively trifling. No man, whether farmer or householder, was ever yet ruined by the amount of rent which he has had to pay. In the case of the farmer especially, the rent is a mere fleabite in comparison with the other expenses of working the land. There never was a more groundless, or a more dishonest, agitation than that which has been raised of late years against rent. Two centuries ago the gross rental paid in England and Wales was equal to twenty-three per cent. of the total produce; now the gross rental is equivalent only to rather

less than six per cent. What then becomes of Mr. Henry George's theory that "rent swallows up the whole gain,"—that "with the increase of productive power rent tends to even greater increase"?

The rental of this country (seventy millions of pounds) is about equal to the amount paid in local rates, so that if Mr. George's scheme were adopted, and all rates and taxes were to be paid by the money which now goes for rent, the net result would be that we should in future have our rates and taxes paid for us. Simply that, and nothing more! And this is to create a new heaven and a new earth! This is the panacea for all our social, and many of our moral, ills! Poverty and misery, pauperism and vice, low wages and bad trade, unwholesome dwellings and unhealthy people, all are to vanish before this magician's wand. Mr. George has certainly befooled a good many thousands of presumably intelligent people, besides indoctrinating multitudes of the ignorant with dangerous Socialistic notions. The condition of the people in countries where rent is unknown, such as Norway and Russia, when compared with that of our own people, is enough to make us bless rent as one of the most beneficent of our institutions. It is an ascertained fact that farmers who have low rents to pay farm their land worse, and reap less benefit from it for themselves, than farmers who have to pay high rents, and also that a reduction of rent often resolves itself into a diminution of exertion, an increase of idleness, and general impoverishment. It is well known that the average Irish tenant is worse, and not better, off as the result of the successive reductions of rent which have recently been given to him by a grandmotherly Legislature.

II. The second great Socialist demand is that private property in general shall be abolished, and all means of production nationalised.

Under such a condition of things it would be impossible for any such thing as individual ownership, personal proprietary right, to exist: and this is a state of affairs so artificial, so monstrous, so entirely foreign to the nature of man that it is difficult for the human mind to conceive of it as actual or possible. Socialists themselves seem to be conscious that the idea is a mere phantasm, with no practical relation to man or his life, a dim abstraction with

which speculative philosophers play at battledore and shuttlecock. For they talk round and round the subject, without once attempting to explain in simple language just what they propose to do and how they propose to do it, and in the end they leave the matter in quite as nebulous a state as it was in at the beginning. "Glittering generalities" form the stock-in-trade of the Socialist writer or orator; to ask him to condescend to particulars is to strike him dumb. He can dream—and dream—and dream; but he cannot tell his dreams coherently. This is another of his dreams—that all means of production other than land shall also be owned by the State; which is to use them not for profit, but for the general good. But oh! if one of these glib-tongued orators would but deign to state exactly what is meant by "nationalising all means of production," and how it is sought to effect this somewhat considerable operation, how grateful we should be. We should then have something substantial to argue with instead of trying to grapple with phantoms.

When we were considering the question of the nationalisation of land, reference was made to the nationalisation of such other means of production as mines, machinery, railways, factories, buildings, and other means of producing wealth, and it was stated that the cost of these in this country would be forty-five hundred millions of pounds, the interest upon which would be two hundred million pounds a year, whilst a similar purchase in the United States would require twenty-three hundred million dollars, the annual interest upon which would amount to more than the entire annual revenue of the country. If it would take more than the whole annual revenue of the United States to pay the interest on the money devoted to the purchase of the land, where would the money come from (an equal amount, mark) to pay the interest on the money laid out in acquiring the other means of production? And if we had to raise two hundred millions annually in England (double our national revenue) as interest on the purchase money of the one form of property, how should we raise another two hundred millions as interest on the purchase money of the other form of property? Socialists do not trouble their heads about these difficulties, partly because they realise that to meet them honestly would be the end of Socialism,

and partly because they mean to take all kinds of property without paying for it.

III. The third demand of Socialism is the abolition of the right of inheritance.

Here we must distinguish between the right of inheritance and the right of bequest, which, though they are often confounded, are essentially distinct. The right of bequest is the right to bequeath one's property to others; the right of inheritance is the right of succession to property by law. The former is inherent in the idea of property; the latter equally so. The right of inheritance, therefore, properly includes a legal right on the part of children and relatives to property which has not been bequeathed to them. The right of inheritance is not an artificial one, resting upon mere expediency, but is necessarily implied in the idea of property.

According to John Stuart Mill, property implies "the right of each to his (or her) own faculties, to what he can produce by them, and to whatever he can get for them in a fair market; together with his right to give this to any other person if he chooses, and the right of that other to receive and enjoy it;" from which he deduces the conclusion "that although the right of bequest, or gift after death, forms part of the idea of private property, the right of inheritance, as distinguished from bequest, does not." What he means is that a man has a right to bequeath his property to whomsoever he will, and that those to whom he bequeaths it have a right to receive it; but that where property has not been bequeathed, and is left by its owner without any disposition at all, nobody has a right to take or receive it, not even the relatives of its late owner. This cannot be admitted without giving up an element vital to the principle of private property. English law, at any rate, recognises that a man's children or nearest of kin are entitled to succeed to his property, although not bequeathed, and this is a just and natural consequence of the moral and natural principles upon which all property rights are founded. Hence the general consent of the laws and customs of civilised nations to this right of inheritance rests upon a natural foundation. What may be done with the property of persons who die intestate is, however, after all, a minor

consideration. Bentham, and other economists, have advocated that when there are no direct heirs the property should go to the State. So be it, if the Legislature so wills it. We are not so much concerned to guard the rights, or the supposed rights, of collateral or distant relatives to inherit property which has not been bequeathed to them, merely because it belonged to one of their kinsman, as to guard the right of an owner of property to bequeath it to whomsoever he wills, relatives or no relatives, and the right of the persons to whom it is bequeathed to receive and enjoy it.

Now, it is obvious that Socialists, when they speak of the right of inheritance, generally mean the right of bequest. But they are anxious to abolish both. They would deny to property owners the right to dispose of their property after death, and empower the State to seize all such property, the object of course being to ultimately transfer all property to the State; for it is evident that every owner of property must die in the course of a comparatively short time, and when the last of them had died all property would have been transferred to the community. Even the abolition of the right of bequest would be no new thing. Among the Romans, as Mill points out, no such right existed originally, and even after it was introduced it was in a restricted form, as the law reserved for each child a legitimate portion which the parent could not will away from it. The French law, as modified by the Revolution, permits the parent to bequeath only a portion of his property equal to the share of one child, each of the children taking an equal portion. So that a French estate, instead of being entailed individually is entailed collectively; instead of being settled upon one child it is divided among all the children. This was a democratic, or a Socialistic, device, designed to break up large properties and to prevent the formation of such properties in future. The evidence does not prove that France is any the better for this compulsory division of property, or that the law is in any wise superior to our own, while it entails much loss and inconvenience by causing commercial and manufacturing establishments to be broken up on the death of the proprietor.

In England the right of bequest not only exists, but, as

befits the freest country in the world, it is unlimited. Why should it not continue to be so? Mill says: "Bequest is one of the attributes of property: the ownership of a thing cannot be looked on as complete without the power of bestowing it, at death or during life, at the owner's pleasure; and all the reasons which recommend that private property should exist recommend *pro tanto* this extension of it." And then, as if he felt that he had gone too far in following a sound principle, Mill allows his Socialistic notions to pull him back, and proceeds to propose various limitations upon the exercise of the right of bequest, which he has only just declared ought to be exercised "at the owner's pleasure." But limitation of the right of bequest is one thing, and its abolition is another. It is for the latter that the Socialists are clamouring.

IV. The fourth demand of Socialism is that the wages system shall be abolished.

Socialists are very fond of denouncing what they call "the iron law of wages." This, as we have seen, was Lassalle's speciality. He asks: "How is it that the workman is so badly off when there is abundance all round? Because of the 'iron economic law of wages,' according to which the average wages of labour always remained reduced to the subsistence necessary, conformably with the nation's standard of life, to the prolongation of existence, and to the propagation of the species. What is the result of this law, which is unanimously acknowledged by men of science? Perhaps you believe that you are men? But economically considered you are only commodities. You are increased by higher wages like stockings, when there is a lack; and you are again got rid of, you are by means of lower wages—by what Malthus, the English economist, calls preventive and destructive checks—decreased like vermin, against which society wages war."

Lassalle appears to have imagined that scientific economists, because they acknowledge the existence of a law of wages, are therefore responsible for having created that law. Just as reasonable would it be to assume that Newton was the author of the law of gravitation because he discovered it. Economists do not invent the laws which they expound; they find them at work in all communities of men; they are

compelled to recognise them as the outgrowth and the expression of the nature and the needs of man. Their business is merely to generalise from facts, to systematise and expound the laws which govern the production, distribution, and consumption of the commodities necessary to mankind. There are such laws, and they cannot be evaded ; they will work according to the quality of their own nature, and work out certain results, and no others. If economists find a law of wages at work, they cannot help it, nor can they alter it.

Another mischievous assumption underlies Lassalle's theories, viz. this, that there is something derogatory to the workman in the fact that the value of his labour, like the value of other commodities, is, and must be, determined by its relative scarcity or abundance in the market. But no free workman, who is at liberty to sell his labour how and where he likes, ever felt degraded by this fact, any more than he feels degraded by conforming to the law that he must eat if he would live. It would be possible to draw a very unflattering portrait of a human being by dilating upon those propensities which he possesses in common with the brute, and ignoring his intellectual and moral qualities, just as Lassalle strives to belittle the workman by comparing him to merchandise, and leaving out of view the higher aspects of the matter. The truth is that Socialistic hostility to the wages system is prompted by two motives, both of them of a very low order, the first being a desire on the part of the workman to be on an equality with his employer, which originates in envy, and the second being a desire to appropriate to himself a larger share of the product, which originates in greed. Envy is the father, and greed the mother, of Socialism.

At this point we reach the fundamental error of Socialism, with which the name of Karl Marx is specially identified, and which is responsible for the greater part of the evil produced by the system. This error is that labour creates value ; that the value of any commodity is represented by the worth of the labour which is materialised in it ; and that the value given by labour to any commodity cannot be increased by exchange. In this theory there is no place for capital ; capital has no legitimate function to perform, and

hence it exploits and spoils labour ; therefore capital should be abolished. Put in a sentence, Marx's principal doctrine is that all capital is created by labour, and ought consequently to belong to the labourers.

This doctrine is the corner stone of modern Socialism; demolish it, and the whole edifice falls to the ground. Once admit that labour is the sole source of wealth, that capital has no share in creating value, and you will be bound on every principle of reason and justice to admit the whole Socialistic contention, expropriate the capitalists, abolish private property, and hand everything over to the community.

This pernicious fallacy has got abroad among our working men, and it is being sedulously propagated by Socialist agitators. It has produced most of the strikes and labour disputes which have done so much injury to our trade, and it bids fair to do more mischief in the future than it has done in the past. And yet it is so evidently false that it is a mystery how it can gain acceptance even among those who are much below the average in point of intelligence.

V. The fifth demand of Socialism is that the competitive system in general should be abolished.

This is something like asking for the abolition of human nature, or the abolition of physical law, or the abolition of religion, or of anything else that is fundamental and indestructible. The competitive system is, on the whole, a blessing and not a curse. It cuts two ways, and it does much more good than harm. Even John Stuart Mill is constrained to admit this. He says: "Competition is often spoken of as if it were necessarily a cause of degradation and misery to the labouring class; *as if high wages were not precisely as much a product of competition as low wages.*" Again: "Wages, like other things, may be regulated either by competition or by custom. In this country *there are few kinds of labour of which the remuneration would not be lower than it is if the employer took the full advantage of competition.*" Mill shows that the action of competition is modified by custom, so that it does not operate with its full force and effect even in those cases where there are no obstacles to restrain it. "Political economists generally,

and English political economists above others, have been accustomed to lay almost exclusive stress upon the first of these agencies ; to exaggerate the effect of competition, and to take into little account the other and conflicting principle (custom). They are apt to express themselves as if they thought that competition actually does, in all cases, whatever it can be shown to be the tendency of competition to do." Herein the economists have been very unwise. They have unwittingly done much to foster the irrational agitation against the competitive system from which we are suffering in these times. It is no exaggeration to say that under the system of free competition the competent man is able to work his way upward to the position to which he is entitled by dint of his ability and energy, if not universally yet generally, and that the incompetent man, so far from being thrust down to the very lowest place, is generally retained in a better position than he deserves, if he possesses moral worth, by reason of the way in which the action of competition is counteracted by custom. In other words, competition produces its fullest effect on its good side, where it can help the worthy and the capable, and its smallest effect on its bad side, where its tendency is to press down the unfit and the incapable. Mill refers only to the effect of custom in modifying the action of competition ; but surely there are other and more powerful agencies which are working in the same direction. The ministrations of religion and charity are largely directed to the same end. How many thousands of men and women would succumb in the struggle for life, go down under the force of competition, if they were not upheld by benevolent men and women acting from the highest motives ? If the object of the competitive system is to secure "the survival of the fittest," the object of a thousand agencies around us is to ensure the survival also of the unfit. It is easy enough to vamp up a few plausible objections to the competitive system. But who would gain from its abolition ? Not the strong and the capable, for the system is favourable to them. Nor yet the weak and the incapable, for, although the system may in some respects bear hardly upon them, its action is so modified as to make their position better on the whole than it would probably be under any other.

VI. The last demand of Socialism is for a graduated Income Tax.

This is a favourite weapon of Socialistic cupidity and envy, and it has been received with marked favour by some statesmen who would hesitate to acknowledge themselves Socialists. But it is entitled to no respect or support from upright men. For what is it? Nothing more nor less than a device for extracting money from wealthy men for no other reason than that the money is required by the State. No sound or intelligent principle rests at the bottom of it. No civilised State has ever declared it a crime to be rich; no such crime is known to the Moral Law; even Jesus Christ did not lay down any such principle. But if it is not a crime why should a man be punished for it? For a punishment it is to any man to be deprived of his lawful property without legitimate cause. If it be said that it is no hardship to a man to be heavily taxed when he has plenty left, it may be replied that the same reasoning would justify the taxation being increased until the man had only sufficient left to provide a bare subsistence. These expedients are dishonest; they are forms of theft disguised under a cloak of legality; they are opposed at once to the moral law of God and to that innate sense of justice in the heart of man which corresponds with it. Of course the object of these devices is to discourage large fortunes, which is another way of discouraging industry and prudence, which is another way of checking production, which is another way of increasing poverty. Socialists desire all these things, but sensible men, and, above all, rulers of nations, would do well to sternly discountenance them. A graduated Income Tax would, no doubt, make rich men poorer, and the number of rich men fewer, but it would also lessen production, decrease wealth, destroy capital, cripple industry, diminish commerce, and lead to general impoverishment, simply because no man would strive to make money if he could not be sure of keeping it. Under such a condition of things the poor would be the chief sufferers; for the worst thing that can happen to a poor man is that he should be doomed to live in a poor country.

We have now passed in review the principal demands of Socialism, and we have demonstrated that they are both

delusive in theory and would be injurious in practice. But let us suppose for the sake of argument that they are as true as we have proved them to be false, and that they would be as beneficent in operation as we have shown they would be disastrous; and further, that they have actually been granted, and that the Socialistic system has been established in this country, What state of things would then exist among us here? There would be no private property either in land or capital; no man could say that aught was his own; everything, from an estate down to a salt-cellar, would belong to the community. We should eat the food and wear the clothes of the State; cultivate State land and live in State houses; manufacture and sell State goods; be attended by State doctors and buried in State graves. There being no individual capitalists, no man would have any particular interest in guarding property, in preventing waste, in making the most and the best of things. In factories and workshops, on railways and in mines, there would be no head or proprietor possessing authority over the workmen, but every man would be equal with every other man. What would be the output of work under such circumstances? It may be safely asserted that it would not be more than one quarter of what it is under the present system. Human nature being what it is, if you establish an order of things under which everybody is assured of subsistence, the certain result would be that the majority would work as little as possible, and not at all if they could help it, and that only the very few who love work for its own sake would be in any degree industrious. To suppose that Socialism would induce men to exert their energies to the utmost is to fly in the face of both reason and experience. It is proverbial that men who are in the public service, whether they be men of education and ability, such as civil servants, or labourers engaged upon public works, do not display anything like the diligence and fidelity which are manifested by men in similar positions who serve private employers; while it is equally notorious that men who deal with public money spend it with a recklessness and an extravagance which if practised in relation to their own affairs would speedily land them in the Bankruptcy Court. It may indeed be laid down as an axiom

that the State does not secure the services of the most able men, except perhaps in the very highest grades of the service, and that those who do enter its service do not work up to the point of efficiency which they would be required to attain under private employers. If this is so under the present competitive system, when Government servants are stimulated by the example of private employers, what might be expected under a collective system, where there would be no examples of exceptional zeal to emulate, but where the all-important consideration would be who could do the least.

Let it be clearly understood, then, that individual freedom, personal choice, can have no place under Socialism. No man would be permitted to do his own work, or to choose his own method or time of doing it; he must work as and when it suits someone else. What he had produced would in no sense belong to him; he would have no share in it, no control over it. Nor would he, as compensation, receive wages which he might spend as he liked; he would receive merely a subsistence. Even his manner of subsistence would be all arranged for him by external authority—what food he should eat and what he should drink, how he should be clothed, what house he should dwell in, what books he should read, how long he should sleep, the whole programme of life would be settled for him. The only part left for him to play would be to do as he was told. Individuality would be annihilated. No man or woman could live his or her own life, or develop his or her qualities of character according to the best light to be obtained and under a sense of personal responsibility to God. In all essential respects the position of the individual under Socialism would correspond with the position of the slave under chattel slavery. But the advantage would be with the slave, inasmuch as he had to deal with a master who might be considerate and humane, whereas the Socialist slave would have to deal with ambitious and corrupt and tyrannical “omniarchs.” Under Socialism the majority would be miserable slaves, “dumb, driven cattle,” marching in deadly routine before a few haughty officers wielding the whip of authority. What a workhouse is now, that would the whole country be then on a large scale. Bureaucracy, officialism, centralisation, despotism, oppression, in

their most corrupt and gigantic forms, would grow rampant. It would be impossible to move a limb without encountering the goads of authority. People would be governed to death. Moral paralysis, intellectual stagnation, social atrophy, would be the inevitable results of such a condition if it could continue long enough. But it is an insult to human nature to assume that a system which would thus outrage and degrade it could ever be established, and much more to suppose that it could ever be permanently rooted. There is but too much reason to fear that certain nations, our own among them, will march too far along the road whose goal is Socialism; but this will be because these people do not realise what Socialism is, and what it involves. When they do realise this they will start back in amazement at their own folly and in alarm at the perils which they have so wantonly courted. One thing which they have not yet clearly understood is that the right of private property and the enjoyment of individual liberty are vitally connected; so that if you kill one you kill both. If Socialism could once be adopted in its entirety by a whole nation its fruits would be so deadly that its own children would arise and devour it; the revolt from it would be so terrible that its very name would be an offence for ages to come.

Having shown that there could be no liberty under a Socialistic system, it now remains to show that neither could there be equality. Of course in theory all would be upon an equality under Socialism, and the advocates of that system urge as one of its greatest recommendations that it would produce equality. But inequality is fundamental; it inheres in the nature of man and in the constitution of things. Where will you begin your feeble and foolish attempts to create an artificial inequality? In the school? The schoolmaster will tell you that his pupils differ almost endlessly in capacity and endowment. One is receptive, another forgetful; one dull witted, another sharp as a needle; one animated by a love of learning, another bored by his lessons as a drudgery. God has been before you in the school. Those children were meant to differ; they must differ; all the coercive laws, all the repression and regulation in the world cannot alter their differences. Will you begin with the cradle? God has been

before you there, too, and the slumbering babe contains within it the germ of the coming man, just as the seed enfolds within it the flower and the fruit which will bloom by-and-bye. Seeds apparently alike produce flowers of various colours and fruits of various flavours: for each contains within itself that which is peculiar to its own nature. So a thousand babes, all very much alike in their cradles, will grow into a thousand men and women of the most diverse characters. Somewhat of the result is due to environment and training; but the essential quality, the element which differentiates the one from the other, is innate, and was there at birth. Nay, before birth even. Farther back than that the mysterious life-process, the up-building of an individual character, begins. Of John the Baptist it is said that he was "filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb;" and of the Prophet Jeremiah God said,—“Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.” Here we stand face to face with the profound mystery of human life. How little we have to do with ourselves or our children after all! Human parentage has no doubt some part to perform in the formation of a child's character. But how little! Even the sex of an infant cannot be determined by its parents. The whole of the wondrous hidden life-process which takes place before birth is independent of their volition. That is the time when God, the great Author and Artist, does His work. “For Thou hast possessed my reins; Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from Thee when I was made in secret; and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in Thy Book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.”* At every birth the creative act is renewed; and God stamps upon the newly born spirit an impress which gives to it

* Psalm 139, verses 13-16.

individuality, imparts to it a bias and quality of its own, makes it a self, unlike any other self that ever was. All the equality-mongers cannot undo that Divine work. What do we mean when we say that the poet is "born, not made?" Was Shakespeare made by any human influence; was his genius the product of his environment? If so, why have we not had another Shakespeare?

There is no such thing as equality of nature, of temperament, of talent, of ability, of position, or of possessions; but there is in civilised countries, or at all events in civilised countries where Christianity holds sway, an equality of *status*, or of right. That is to say, both rich and poor equally enjoy the right of freedom, the right to be protected by the law both in person and property, the right to be treated justly, and, generally, the right to do as they please provided that they do not infringe the liberty of others or offend against the interests of society. This is the kind of equality which both religion and reason contribute to establish and support, and it is compatible with the largest inequality in other directions. Indeed this inequality exists in England to-day, for we are all equal before the law, but in all other respects, physically, mentally, morally, and socially, we differ in every conceivable manner and degree to our great advantage. The equality of Socialism is not equality of *status*, but equality of condition, and this form of equality is impossible because it is opposed to the laws of nature and of God, and repugnant alike to the reason and the conscience of man.

Socialism, properly understood, although it is visionary as to its aims, is in its essence a system of coarse materialism. Its philosophy is carnal. It is a monstrous perversion of truth and order, and if adopted it would infallibly destroy the beauty and the harmony of human life. It begins at the wrong end. It thinks that man's nature can be changed merely by changing his environment; in other words, it magnifies the environment and belittles the man. But the man is always greater than his environment. The true method is to change the ideas, the dispositions, the heart of the man; this being done, his environment may be left to take care of itself.

CHAPTER III.

WARNINGS FROM HISTORY AND EXPERIENCE; THE FAILURE OF SOCIALISM.

WE have now considered the spirit which animates Socialism, and the proposals for social regeneration which are the outgrowth of that spirit; and we have endeavoured to prove that these proposals, viewed as the basis of a new order of society, are so inherently absurd as to be incapable of being reduced to practice.

History abounds with examples of Socialistic schemes which have been melancholy, if sometimes brilliant, failures. With the wreckage of such schemes the shores of history are strewn, and every piece of such wreckage is aflame with danger-lights to those who have eyes to see; it is a beacon warning to the mariner on the economical ocean that he had better avoid those dangerous shoals. From the Incas of Peru down to the present-day schemes of Count Tolstoi and the prophet Harris, it is everywhere the same lamentable story. Futility, folly, calamity, and ruin have ever been associated with the hare-brained attempts of Socialistic visionaries to resist the laws which God has ordained for the government of human society. Human nature is the rock upon which these Socialistic enterprises usually split themselves into pieces. There is a great deal of human nature in this world, and it is very hard and stubborn material to deal with, and any philosopher or reformer who omits to take it into account as the chief factor with which he has to deal has virtually failed before he begins. Even God himself undertakes no work so difficult as that of governing free and rational moral agents. In this region even infinite love, wisdom, and power are frequently baffled and defeated. It was easy for the Deity to create material worlds and universes; for mere matter has no inherent power to resist His omnipotent decree. Human beings, however, as they are free agents, possessing reason and will and conscience,

which, within certain limits, are free to discern, choose, decide, and act as they like, can, and do, oppose even the Almighty to His face, and resist Him successfully to the very end of their lives. Even God fails to do as and what He would with men and women, over thousands of whom he has to make the pathetic lament—"I would, but ye would not." If even God is baffled and thwarted by human nature, how vain a delusion is it for Socialistic philosophers to suppose that this same human nature is going to be in their hand as clay in the hands of the potter.

History presents no example of a permanently successful Socialistic community. In almost every age such communities have come into being, and the total number of them which have been started during the Christian era must amount to many thousands; yet out of them all not one has survived into the present age. They have all been limited and local in their character; they have all been short lived; they have all failed to attain the objects for which they were commenced; they have all come to an ignominious end. Such imperfect success as they did attain was entirely due to the fact that the community was so small that the principle of Individualism remained more powerful than the principle of Communism; in other words, their success was owing to the very principle that they were established to extirpate. Every community of this kind, its members being few in number, was under the absolute control of some strong-willed chief, and of course his government was individualistic. The theory of Socialism is that every member of the community is to be equal, and if this theory was carried out, the meanest member would have as much power as the head himself. But the theory never is carried out; in fact, the theory of Socialism is so absurd that even those who profess to accept it cannot possibly put it into practice. The facts and principles and laws which operate in the world are too powerful for them. Again, each of these communities held its own property, and that property was distinct from the property of the general community in the midst of which this particular community resided, and distinct from the property of individuals who were members of that general community. And further by reason of these Socialistic communities being small, each member was able

to estimate pretty accurately the value of the common stock, and also to calculate the value of the increase which was made to that common stock, and the value of his own share of that increase. Frequently members had the option of leaving the community when they desired, and of taking with them that proportion of the common property which was due to their individual exertions. In short, these Socialistic enterprises were economically very little different from co-operative communities, in which, although the whole of the property belonged to the entire community, the individual members neither merged their individuality nor gave up their claim to a proportionate share of the general wealth. It is virtually a misnomer to call such communities Socialistic at all, for they have been more Individualistic than Socialistic, and whatever success they may have achieved must be credited to the action of the principle of Individualism which was operating in and through them. A Socialistic nation, pure and simple; a State organised upon the principles of Socialism, that is to say, a State in which all land, all means of production, all labour, and all wealth belong to the State, and no portion to any individual whatever; a State in which no man or body of men are allowed to own what they earn by their hands or brains, and in which absolute equality has been enforced, the brightest and cleverest men being crushed down to the level of the dullest and most stupid—such a State as this, which is precisely what a Socialistic State would be, the world has never seen. Consequently we have no experience at all in regard to such a State to guide us. And we are never likely to have any; for it is an absolute impossibility to organise a State upon such a basis, or, if it could be organised, to maintain it for a single week.

The fact that no Socialistic enterprise has ever survived or triumphed is a strong presumption that no such enterprise will ever survive or triumph. The failure of all such efforts constitutes the clearest possible proof that Socialism is against the order of Nature, against the divinely ordained constitution of things, against God Himself. God is an Individualist. From the inherent necessity of His nature He must be so, for He can have no equal. Even the universe is not large enough for two infinite beings. And

God made man an individualist, too; and all efforts of "reformers" will fail to make him anything else. Every man is distinct from every other man. He is a separate and original creation; he has a personality which is different from that of any other human being. No two men are, or can be, alike. Each has his own endowments, his own place, and his own work. And these are peculiar to himself alone.

Socialism, strictly defined and properly understood, has, as we have already remarked, no traditions to appeal to. This fact will be seen to be very significant when it is fully apprehended. Most movements have a past which can be appealed to by their enthusiastic supporters. But the most enthusiastic Socialist cannot point to an age in which, or to a nation by whom, the principles which he advocates have been carried out into practice. Socialism is all in the air. It is entirely a matter of theory. We do not, however, require to see Socialistic principles put into practice in order to be able to understand their effects, any more than we need to apply a match to a barrel of gunpowder in order to assure ourselves that it will explode. We know well enough that from the nature of fire and gunpowder they cannot be brought into contact without an explosion following; and we know equally well that the principles of Socialism and the laws of human nature and human life are so diametrically opposed to each other, that any attempt to force the latter into conformity with the former must infallibly lead to war, misery, and general ruin. It is as certain as any problem in mathematics that if a state of things could be created under which no man could enjoy in security what he had earned by his own labour, or what had been given to him by others who had laboured for it, then no man would be at the pains to make the best use of his abilities, his energies, and his opportunities. In such a state of affairs it would pay a man no better to be industrious than it would to be lazy, and the natural consequence would be that every man would be lazy. In a community where no man cared to work, there would be no production of wealth, the land would either lie barren, or would be cultivated only sufficiently to afford a meagre subsistence; as for manufactures, they could not be carried on at all; while the arts and sciences would

absolutely perish. Under such a condition of things every man would have to work harder than any man works now, even to get the barest subsistence, whilst no man would have either wealth or leisure. Wealth cannot be accumulated in any country where property is insecure, and where wealth is not accumulated no man can have leisure, and where no man can possess leisure it is impossible for the higher arts and refinements of life to have any existence at all. By the simple expedient of putting an end to the principle of private property you can also put an end to the productiveness of labour and the accumulation of wealth, and to put an end to these is to plunge society from civilisation back into barbarism. Our civilisation, which has been the growth of centuries, and which appears to be permanent and unshakable, reposes absolutely upon the naked principle that every man shall be entitled to own what he earns, and to hold it against all the world, and that in order to enable him to thus hold it the whole forces of the State shall be placed at his disposal. That principle destroyed, the whole fabric of our civilisation comes tumbling down about our ears.

Did space admit of it we might consider in some detail certain experiments which have been made in the direction of attempting to establish Socialism, both in its modified form of State Socialism and in its extreme form of Communism, in order to demonstrate that the system, when it is subjected to the test and strain of fact and brought into actual conflict with human nature, utterly and hopelessly breaks down.

Only in the bracing air of freedom can strong character be developed. In order to breed a race of self-reliant people you must train them to rely upon themselves. Let the State do everything for them, and the result will inevitably be that they will become incapacitated to do anything for themselves. A nation of youths in swaddling-bands means a nation of men on crutches. We have entered upon the downward path here. Time was when the Englishman did everything for himself—even down to being his own policeman; and those were the times when the Englishman was a match for any three men of another nationality. The most glorious age of our history—the age of Milton and

Shakespeare and Bacon, of Queen Elizabeth and Drake and Raleigh, the age when we repulsed Armadas and made ourselves masters of the sea, and at the same time produced the greatest poems and books in our language—was an age when the entire population of England numbered only about a couple of millions. But the average Englishman of that day was much greater than the average Englishmen of this. What has made the difference? Many things, no doubt, but certainly this one among them as chief—that the Englishman has been continually growing less self-reliant, and more dependent upon the State. He delegated to the State the power of police, and agreed to pay it in the shape of taxes for the protection which it afforded to his property; and now the State turns round upon him, denies that it has received any delegated power from him, denies even his right to delegate such power, and claims that both he and his property belong to it, and that it has power to dispose of both as it wills. Then the State was little, and the individual much; soon the individual will be nothing, and the State all in all. Already we are governed, over-governed, mis-governed, until we don't know where we are, what we can do, and what we cannot. Ever at our elbow is the State, saying, "Thou shalt not." Unless the average Englishman realises the peril which now threatens us from the aggressive encroachments of the State, the end of all this legislative meddling and coddling is certain—the undoing of England. As the result of yielding to Socialistic principles bit by bit of our liberties, we have reached the stage when we are indisposed to act for ourselves, and to ever cry out to the State for help; and there is no surer sign of the decay of manhood than that.

During the Middle Ages, including under that term the period stretching from the fourth to the sixteenth centuries of the Christian era, hundreds of attempts were made to establish systems of Christian Socialism and Communism, and out of them all not one succeeded. The significance of this long record of failure is not realised unless we bear in mind the fact that the men and women who founded these communities were in all cases people of marvellous faith, enthusiasm, and energy, and in many cases of the highest purity of character as well. They were not mere politicians,

acting from low motives of expediency or selfishness, but zealots, who sacrificed all for the sake of their cause, and who verily believed that they were striving to produce the true model of the Christian society upon earth. If in such hands Socialism could not succeed, how can it ever succeed in any?

The system which prevailed in the monasteries, though it is often appealed to by modern Socialists as evidence of the practicability of their theories, was not really Socialism at all. In the first place it was voluntary, while Socialism is compulsory. There is a whole world of difference there. It is quite possible for a number of good people to voluntarily co-operate together on Communistic principles under the influence of lofty motives and in a spirit of self-surrender; it is equally possible for a number of bad people to voluntarily form a similar community, and to make animal enjoyment and self-indulgence the end of their being. The voluntariness is the essence of the matter. The monks may have been good at first; they certainly became bad at last. Even in its highest and best form, however, Monachism was not Communism pure and simple, such as would be produced by Socialism. The original members of the community may have agreed to have all things in common; but they also agreed, by their rule of celibacy, that they would not have their numbers increased. A rule of celibacy would hardly be practicable in a Socialistic nation. Nor could we expect in a general community the sustained religious fervour which was the mainstay of these monastic institutions. Besides all this, there is the fact that these small communities had the great world outside to draw upon; their property was distinct from that of the general community, that is to say, they were left by the larger society in the quiet enjoyment of their own property. But this could not be the case when the whole of the general community was Socialistic. There is, therefore, no true analogy between the monastery and the Socialistic State.

Among Protestant communities the Moravian Brotherhood has perhaps most nearly succeeded in realising the Socialistic ideal. And yet its failure was as signal and complete as that of Monachism itself.

The inability or the unwillingness of mankind to learn

from experience, that is of the many to learn from the experience of the few, is one of the most astounding facts of social philosophy. From his own experience a man may sometimes learn; from the experience of others he seldom does. If "experience makes fools wise," it is surprising that the amount of experience accumulated upon this subject has not produced more wisdom in the world. For still the work of establishing Utopias goes merrily forward; still Sisyphus strives to roll his stone up the mountain side.

After passing under review Socialistic schemes of every kind, no sensible man could, in view of the facts, do other than admit that they have failed, completely and ignominiously failed, in every respect but one, viz., in illustrating the amazing and the everlasting credulity of the human mind. Large endowments of land and cattle, as in the case of "New Australia;" high personal character, as in the case of Brook farm; exalted and sustained personal enthusiasm, as in the case of the religious communities of the Middle Ages; the immense authority and resources of an entire nation, as in the case of Sparta and Peru—none of these has sufficed to prevent disaster. And it must be borne in mind that a modern State, England for example, which should decide to embark its fortunes on the sea of Socialism, although it might command enormous material resources, would not be able to rely upon those moral forces, religious zeal, heroic self-surrender, and ardent enthusiasm for humanity, which in these matters count for infinitely more than even material wealth. Socialism adopted under the pressure of the popular vote would be nothing more nor less than a political expedient, and consequently it could rely upon only political forces. And of all forces other than those which are material political forces are the most feeble and inconstant.

Why have these Socialistic experiments failed? Why has their lofty idealism ended in the gutter and the sty? Because they have taken no account of the simplest facts and factors of human nature; because they have refused to recognise that prosperity is built upon freedom, and that if that foundation is removed the superstructure must crash down; because they have set themselves to do battle with the great law that what the individual earns the individual

must own and enjoy. In that battle they have been worsted, as they ever will be ; for in all similar conflicts the triumph will remain with individual right and liberty. It cannot be too often repeated that the entire fabric of our civilisation reposes upon the apparently simple, but really profoundly complex, principle that every man shall hold, and be empowered to hold, what he earns, or what is given to him, against the whole world.

Now, what is the lesson to be drawn from this long and unvarying record of Socialistic failure ? Surely this—that the less we have to do with Socialism in any of its forms the better ; that the more loyal we are to the principles of Individualism the more effectually we shall promote both our own personal interests as citizens and the greater interests of the country that we love. Concession to Socialism is both a folly and a crime. Logically there is no end to it until we reach the condition of the Spartans under Lycurgus, or of the Peruvians under the Incas, or of the “New Australians” under Dictator Lane. But most of our politicians are all for such concession, and not a few of them are Socialists out and out. If we permit them to work their will upon us England will probably descend to the blessed condition which is said to exist in Samoa, where a man may take anything he wants from his neighbour without paying for it, and may even quarter himself in his neighbour's house for as long as he likes. These customs, which originated in a benevolent idea to prevent destitution, have ruined Samoa, as they would ruin any country. The most effectual method of spreading destitution and disease, poverty, and misery, throughout the land, is to abolish, or even to sensibly weaken, the right of the individual to own himself and what he earns by the use of himself.

CHAPTER IV.

ON SOME GRAVE DANGERS AHEAD, ARISING OUT OF CONCESSIONS TO THE SOCIALISTIC SPIRIT.

UNDER free representative institutions the welfare of a country depends largely upon the conduct of the men who are chosen to fill its highest offices. More indeed depends upon men than upon institutions. For institutions are but machinery; they cannot work unless they are actuated by the human spirit. Under all forms of government personality is the great factor that counts. Men, not institutions, govern the world. Nowhere does the power of Individualism more strongly assert itself than in the sphere of government; and under a system of Socialism this power would strive to assert itself at least as strongly as it does under any other.

It is strange, when we come to think of it, that so little attention should be paid to the responsibility of rulers and statesmen. The power wielded by these men is enormous; if it be wielded wisely it works for the weal of the nation, if unwisely it works for its woe. To have bad men occupying its highest positions is a nation's curse; to have incompetent or thoughtless men occupying these positions is its misfortune. Happily, it is seldom true of any nation that the majority of its rulers are wicked; but unhappily it is often the case that such a majority are feeble or incapable. And if history teaches one lesson more clearly than another it is that public men who lack soundness of judgment and determination of character may under given circumstances do more harm than other public men who are morally their inferiors but who are sagacious and resolute. Moral qualifications are of course desirable in a statesman, to some extent they are indeed indispensable, but in themselves they are not sufficient. Mental equipment is at least as essential as moral. Without intellectual penetration and force, great power of insight and intuition, a large spirit of tolerance,

extensive knowledge of human nature, promptness in decision, an ardent love of liberty, and warm sympathy with the highest aspirations of mankind, no man can be a true or a successful statesman. If with these qualities are conjoined deep personal religion and high moral excellence he will be so much the wiser and stronger; but without these qualities his morality and religion will never make him other than an infliction upon the nation. In view of certain tendencies now current in society it is necessary to bear these truths in mind.

The hurt which may be done to a community by a wicked or a foolish statesman is absolutely incalculable. The consequences which flow from his actions are so far-reaching and so enduring as to make even the worst errors or faults of other men small by comparison. In all ages and countries the traitor has been marked out as an example of exceptional and abnormal degradation and depravity; but there is no traitor so villainous as the statesman who betrays his country. The liar, the thief, the forger, the drunkard, the adulterer, even the murderer, are all venial sinners as compared with the statesman who defiles the well-springs of a nation's life; for the influence of their misdeeds is usually confined within a narrow circle, whereas the influence of his may corrupt and blight a whole people. Jeroboam's infamous distinction was that "he made Israel to sin;" and this has been the distinction of many a ruler since his time. On the whole there is something to be said for the summary method of those Oriental potentates who cut off a Grand Vizier's head when they find out that he is abusing his position. In civilised and free countries we cannot behead statesmen who by their incapacity, or their flaccidity, or their turpitude involve the nation in misfortune and misery; but we can impeach them before the national conscience when it becomes clear that their course is evil, and on judgment being delivered against them we can dismiss them from office in ignominy, and place them under ban and penalty. If the national conscience were healthy such impeachment would not be so rare as it is. Among ourselves to-day there are statesmen who, instead of being held in honour, ought, if judged according to their works, to be sunk in the deepest disgrace.

In view of what has been stated as to the nature of Socialism, and as to the consequences which must inevitably flow from it in so far as it may be adopted, what is to be said of those statesmen who, whilst they are fully persuaded of its error and its evil, nevertheless for personal or political ends dilly-dally with it, dandle it, encourage it? It must be said that they are committing one of those blunders which are worse than crimes, and also that they are hatching curses, which, like chickens, will surely come home to roost. Even Bismarck, sensible as he is of the ruinous nature of Socialism now, coquetted with it in former days by holding out the hand of encouragement to Lassalle, and it is a question whether the harm which he then did Germany will not outweigh the good which he has incontestably done her by his great actions since. In the course of this work we have shown how our own Government, by their failure to protect liberty and property during the Dock Strike, prepared trouble for themselves in the shape of strikes among their own servants in the army, the police force, and the post-office. We have also pointed out how certain of our statesmen and public bodies have encouraged the growth of Socialism in the most unabashed manner.

A careful study of our recent political history is not calculated to raise very bright hopes as regards the immediate future. In some respects it is no doubt true that the nation was never so rich and prosperous as it is now, and that all classes of the community, the working classes pre-eminently, are immeasurably better off than they have ever been at any previous period. What is even more important, the nation is advancing in wealth and prosperity, and all classes of the people are sharing in the increase of riches and of comfort which are the general results of commercial progress. Not only are the working classes of the present generation much better paid, fed, clothed, housed, and educated than their fathers were, but the next industrial generation will be even better off in all respects than is the present generation. The condition of the working classes is not stationary but progressive. The standard of comfort is continually rising; the wants of even the poorest of the people are ever increasing; and the means of reaching that standard and supplying these wants are in the main secured.

The progress which has been made during the present century is perfectly amazing, and it ought to satisfy even the most ardent reformers. It certainly will satisfy reasonable people, who comprehend the difficulty and complexity of industrial and economical questions, and who have learned enough to understand that movement in these matters must necessarily be slow if it is to be permanent, and that the slower it is the more likely it is to keep its footing. This immense and astonishing advance has been achieved in accordance with, and by the help of, those economical laws which are now so much derided by shallow demagogues. The natural and beneficent consequence of progress having been achieved in this way is that it is assured—assured, that is, so long as these laws continue to be observed; but if these laws are ignored, or wilfully defied, then we shall not only cease to make progress, but we shall start on the backward path. A reaction will set in, and we shall be plunged back again into the miserable conditions out of which we have emerged with so much pain and difficulty. Amid the enthusiasm for "reform," which characterises the present day, there is grave danger of these two facts being forgotten—first, that we owe our progress to our obedience of sound economical laws; and, secondly, that we shall inevitably lose the ground we have already gained if we cease to act in harmony with these laws, and permit ourselves to be made the sport of a blind and destructive Socialism. We have only to sanction attacks upon property, none the less vicious because they are veiled, and attacks upon freedom, the more fatal because they masquerade in the cloak of zeal for liberty; we have but to use the political power which has been placed in the hands of the working classes as an engine for oppressing and despoiling the owners of wealth; we have but to make stealthy inroads upon the doctrine and custom of private property, in order to hurl England from her proud position as the wealthiest and mightiest nation in the world and to degrade her to the position of the meanest and the poorest. We have already made a good beginning.

We are not unmindful of the fact that politicians are but politicians; that they are, from the nature of the case, opportunists; that they are not autocrats to carry out their

own will, but servants of the nation to carry out its will; and that they must be content to do what they can, and not what they would. But whilst they are the servants of the nation they are also its advisers, and the people look to them for counsel, for direction, even for warning, remonstrance, and actual assistance, when these are needed. And the people have more respect for a statesman who opposes them to their face, and refuses to march at their head any longer when he believes them to be going wrong, than they have for one who, though he holds that they are entering upon the wrong course, nevertheless consents to lead them. Formerly our statesmen claimed some power of initiative and of choice, maintained a large measure of vigorous independence, and looked for some reliance to be placed upon their judgment; that is to say they acted, and claimed to be treated, as intelligent, conscientious, and responsible men. Alas! that type of statesman is almost extinct. In his place we have a mere politician who is his antithesis in every respect. If Democracy has done nothing else for us it has destroyed the race of great statesmen who were once our pride and our glory. A few capable and honourable men we have who, under heavy disadvantages, are fighting a good fight. All praise to them! But as for the majority of our politicians, they are not content to be the servants of the people; they go before the people, anticipate their wishes, pander to their prejudices. It is well that they should go before the people when we are on the right road, but not well when we are on the wrong one, as we decidedly are at present on those questions which are social and economical.

The effect of this waywardness on the part of our politicians, these incessant attacks upon capital, these continual encroachments upon individual liberty, is to create in the community a perpetual sense of uncertainty, a dread of the next thing that may happen, a haunting sensation of insecurity. Confidence is dead. Here we have precisely the conditions which induce stagnation, paralysis, decay. The worst evils of tyranny have always flowed from the simple fact that it destroyed confidence. No man could be sure that he would be allowed to enjoy what he produced; therefore he did not produce. Production will be suspended

wherever insecurity reigns. Whatever tends to beget uncertainty tends to check and limit production, that is to decrease wealth and comfort, that is to increase poverty and misery. Certainty is the most encouraging stimulus to every operation of human industry. It is the secret force by which productive energy is sustained ; by which the destroying forces are kept under ; by which the balance between man and Nature is preserved ; by which civilisation itself continues to exist. Dissipate that secret force, substitute for it the opposing force of uncertainty, and the productive energy of the country will immediately cease. Let that cease, and the fields become barren and desolate, the towns are forsaken, the roads become impassable, the canals are choked up, the rivers break down their banks, the sea itself swallows up the land. Security is

“ What makes a nation happy, and keeps it so ;
insecurity is

“ What ruins kingdoms, and lays cities flat.”

If we have not suffered severely in this country as yet from these confiscations of property and infringements of liberty, it is because that certainty which the citizen possesses that he will be permitted to retain his property and enjoy his liberty unmolested, which is the growth of centuries of good government, is not easily broken down. But it has certainly been badly shaken, and to that extent the social fabric has been impaired. If the mischief spreads the results may be disastrous.

CHAPTER V.

POLITICAL ECONOMY: THE OLD AND THE NEW.

WE have previously remarked in the course of this work that no science is really more simple, that none ought to be more attractive, than Political Economy, which relates to the commonest things of daily life. But Rousseau made one wise observation when he said that "it requires a great deal of philosophy to *observe* once what is *seen* every day." The things of Political Economy are seen every day; perhaps that is the reason why so few people perceive or understand them. The province of this science has been admirably defined to be "to observe and explain the laws which govern the Production, Distribution, and Consumption of those articles of utility essential to the subsistence and comfort of the human race which we call Wealth," to treat of "the Wants of man and the Means of satisfying them." Nothing could well be simpler or more natural. If in some of its aspects the science of political economy appears to be technical, complex, abstruse to a degree that baffles the average mind, this arises partly from the almost innumerable wants of man in a highly civilised state and the consequent multiplicity and variety of the means required to satisfy them, and partly from the academic and professional spirit of its professors, who too often write as if they wished to form a special cult and did not wish the ordinary man of the world to grasp too much of their meaning. In reality, however, there is nothing in the science that the average mind cannot fully understand; while it is certainly difficult to conceive of any branch of human knowledge that has a more attractive or perennial charm for those who do understand it.

Nevertheless, of all the sciences Political Economy is perhaps the one that has fewest true friends. Even its teachers are half-hearted; they speak in halting tones; they are paralysed by feebleness and incertitude. As for its

enemies they stigmatise it as the "dismal science." Statesmen, when they find that its dictates and doctrines are inconvenient, airily banish it to Saturn. Yet Political Economy, like wisdom, is justified of its children. Both nations and rulers of nations find out in time that it is at their peril that they ignore it and trample it underfoot. Political Economy is a much misunderstood science. By one class of persons it is disparaged because, in their judgment, it is a hypothetical science, that is to say, that it deals largely with assumptions and suppositions. But the same objection might be urged with more or less force against every science. Even physical sciences are in some sense hypothetical. In every branch of inquiry something must be assumed to start with, and something else must be supposed as we go along. So that the objection that Political Economy is hypothetical is seen to be puerile. So far indeed is Political Economy from being hypothetical that it may be said to deal less with suppositions and more with facts than almost any other science. It is based on experience and certitude. Professor Shield Nicholson points out the remarkable fact that two-thirds of the "Wealth of Nations" is history, and that "it is history of the first rank, and it is so because it is history that is introduced for the illustration, confirmation, or qualification, as the case may be, of principles."

In some other quarters a strong prejudice exists against Political Economy because it is supposed to be a vulgar science. Because Adam Smith, Jeremy Bentham, and the rest, occupied themselves largely with inquiries relating to the production and distribution of wealth, the nature of value, the uses of money, and similar subjects; because they analysed the motives which impel and govern men in the common actions of their daily lives, and demonstrated that the strongest of all human motives are of a selfish or self-regarding character; and because they were practical, hard-headed, common-sense men who rigorously drove their facts and arguments to logical conclusions; they are accused of being hard and harsh, and the science itself, which is a study of wealth, is supposed to be in some way a commendation and glorification of selfishness. But the people who thus talk fail to discriminate between two very dissimilar

things. To study the production and distribution of wealth scientifically is one thing; to recommend the pursuit of wealth for its own sake and as the end of life is another thing. Political Economy does the former, but not the latter. Indeed it would be quite beyond its function to say whether men ought or ought not to make the pursuit of wealth the end of life; for the purpose of Political Economy is to teach economics and not morality. Political Economy, like every other branch of human knowledge and inquiry, is progressive. It must in the nature of things be so, not only because its principles and laws are deduced from facts after prolonged and laborious investigations, but also because it deals with human society. Herein it differs materially from most other sciences. The geologist, the physiologist, the botanist, the astronomer, and many other scientific inquirers have an immense advantage in the fact that the subject matter of their study is practically unchangeable. The plants and animals which exist in the world are practically the same as to their species and structure to-day as they were five hundred years ago; a thousand years makes virtually scarcely any difference in the geological formations of the earth or in the solar system. But human society, with which our economist has to deal, is ever changing as to its circumstances and conditions. No doubt human nature, in the main, is the same to-day as it was originally; but the environment amidst which that nature works, and by which it is influenced, has changed very materially indeed. And it is with the environment that the economist is very largely, if, indeed, he is not principally, concerned. It necessarily follows that a system of Political Economy, which is admirably adapted to one age, is wholly inapplicable to another, at all events, as regards much of its method and machinery; though undoubtedly, when we look at the substance and essence of the matter, there is something in the very earliest and crudest systems of Political Economy which vitally connects them with the most recent and the most perfect embodiments of the science. Every age has its own economical problems to solve. The problems which confront us in this age are totally different from those with which our ancestors had to deal when England was a purely

agricultural country, sparsely populated, and free from the responsibilities which now rest upon her. Strictly speaking, Political Economy is as yet merely in its infancy, and this is so mainly because the conditions under which civilised men live have been so revolutionised by the invention of printing, of the steam engine, of all kinds of industrial machinery, by the construction of railways and steamboats, and by electric communication, that human beings have been virtually placed in new circumstances, to which as yet they have scarcely had time to adjust themselves, and consequently the sociological facts and conditions with which Political Economy concerns itself are themselves virtually in their infancy. Even supposing that Political Economy as a science had attained to a perfect development before these inventions had been discovered, and before modern social and industrial conditions had been created, it would have been practically useless; we should have had to construct a new Political Economy to meet the needs of the new time. As a matter of fact, however, Political Economy did not reach anything approaching perfection until the present century, and even now it is still very imperfect. It owes very little to the ancients; it is essentially a modern science. Economic truth and economic freedom have been slowly growing through the centuries, and there has been gradually accumulating a body of facts and of laws affecting the economical relations of human beings, but there was no serious attempt to reduce the facts and laws to a system—that is, to treat them scientifically, until modern times.

It is a mistake to suppose that there is any gulf between the old Political Economy and the new; that is when they are properly understood. There has not even been any breach of continuity. The new Political Economy, so far as it is true, is a natural outgrowth of the old. As Professor Marshall puts it: "The new doctrines have supplemented the older—have extended, developed, sometimes corrected them, and often have given them a different tone by a new distribution of emphasis; but very seldom have subverted them."

No doubt the old economists had their defects. They were apt to take very narrow views and to overlook a good

many things which ought to have found a place in their thoughts and to have modified their views. But this is a fault which is apt to be displayed by earnest men. They concentrate their thought and energy upon one subject, or upon those aspects of a subject which appear to them to be of the greatest moment. Even with regard to man they did not take a sufficiently comprehensive view. They were liable to think that every man was like every other man, that there was no practical difference between the banker in the city and the workman in the factory; and they did not perhaps make sufficient allowance for the changes which are always taking place in the habits of the individual and the institutions of the nation. There was just a little too much rigidity about their system. On the whole, however, they did excellent work, and the main body of their teaching is so true and sound that it cannot be ignored without the most serious consequences to the nation. They saw much more than their critics give them credit for; and at all events they treated economics in the true scientific spirit, without lachrymose sentimentalism, which is more than can be said for most of the economists of the new school.

The rehabilitation of the Old Political Economy is proceeding apace in spite of the violent attacks to which it is ever and anon subjected by its assailants. Time is its most powerful champion; experience is its best vindicator. Opponents of the Old Political Economy will discover amid the battles that are coming upon us that it is very much alive; that it has a good deal to say for itself; and that it is capable of waging a stout warfare on behalf of its position.

The New Political economy is misnamed. It is not the Political Economy in it which is new, but rather an emotion of sympathy, undefinable and unregulated, with the poorer and more unfortunate classes of society. This sympathy, although it is supposed in some way to be an outgrowth of some higher development of economical knowledge, is really the product of altogether different causes, and has nothing whatever to do with Political Economy properly understood.

One of the most marked effects of recent attempts to illegitimately widen the boundaries of economic science is

a persistent endeavour, especially in times of industrial conflict, to substitute "public sympathy" (ignorant sentiment), or "political humanity" (partizan zeal), for Political Economy. Two notable efforts of this description took place in connection with the great dock strike in London in 1889, and the great coal strike in the North in 1893. In both these cases, and also in numerous smaller disputes, the strikers were encouraged by reiterated assurances that the sympathy of the public was with them, and by the ostentatious support of politicians who were, as everybody knew, seeking votes. Of course the results were to make the strikers obstinate; to increase their numbers by inducing men in other occupations to strike "in sympathy" with them (and also to get a little of the favourable wind into their own sails); and to spread lawlessness and disorder. Into the facts or the merits of the case the public never inquired. How could they? It was enough for them to know that dock labourers, workmen of the lowest class, were receiving the iniquitous wage of fivepence an hour, exactly double the wages of agricultural labourers, who are altogether a finer body of men. And whilst fivepence an hour was wickedly insufficient, sixpence an hour would be ample and satisfactory! How this could be nobody explained, for nobody knew. But that did not matter; for at such times knowledge and reason are thrown to the winds. In the case of the coal-miners, "political humanity" formulated the demand that wages must govern prices, and not prices wages, or in other words that labour must be paid at a certain rate even if what it produces has to be sold for less than the cost of its production. If "political humanity" could work that miracle it might indeed congratulate itself, and look down with more contempt than ever upon its hated foe—Political Economy. Evidently there are hosts of people among us who "hug the idea that there are snug corners in the universe of things where miracles can still be worked," and not a few of them believe that the coal-field of Great Britain is such a corner. When these strikes, about which the public gushed so much, were over, then the said public congratulated itself upon the extinction of the relentless and heartless laws of Political Economy and the substitution for them of loftier and kinder views on the

relations of capital and labour. But the public will experience a rude awakening some day, and Political Economy will have its revenge ; for Nature always exacts penalties for the violation of her laws.

Sympathy with the poorer classes of the community is a very amiable and praiseworthy quality ; but when it takes the form of aiding these poorer classes at the expense of other classes of society, it is seen to be a quality far less reputable and commendable. Much of the sympathy with the labouring classes of which we hear so much nowadays, is, when analysed, seen to be nothing more nor less than glaring injustice. Many of the so-called "reforms" which are so persistently advocated are simply so many methods of depriving the wealthier classes of that which indubitably belongs to them in order to give it to other classes who have no legal or even moral claim to it whatever. Flagrant unrighteousness, although it may be disguised for the time by a cloak of sympathy with the poor and miserable members of society, can never take any really firm hold of a justice-loving people. Let us sympathise with the poor by all means ; it is seemly and Christian so to do ; but let us not rob the rich in order to help the poor. For such help the poor will in the end be the worse and not the better. It is the interest of the poor man even more than of the rich man that every man shall be able to hold that which is his own against all the world. The old proverb says : "Do not steal a goose in order to give religion the giblets ;" and in a similar spirit we may say to the impulsive and short-sighted, as well as to the deliberately dishonest, among modern "reformers"—"Do not pull down the fabric of society in order to give working men a few bits of old and rotten firewood."

We hear a good deal of jargon talked just now in certain quarters with regard to what is called the "new spirit" which is alleged to have entered into the old body of Political Economy. This "new spirit," however, when fairly looked in the face is seen to be one of the old ghosts which have been flitting about in the world for hundreds and even thousands of years. It is simply the spirit of envy, of greed, of class hatred ; the spirit which teaches men that instead of helping themselves they should be

helped by others; the spirit, which, although it pretends to promote liberty, equality, and fraternity, would really make liberty impossible, create grosser inequalities than any which now exist, and drive the brotherly temper from amongst the children of men. The less we have of this "new spirit" the better.

Those who undertake to teach us what Political Economy is, according to the new style, make the fundamental mistake of assuming that it is the office of Political Economy to teach morality and philanthropy. Really it is not the function of Political Economy to teach these things at all. Political Economy is a science quite as much as chemistry is, and its laws, so far as they are actually laws at all, are quite as true in their nature and as certain in their effects as the laws of chemistry themselves are. Economical laws are statements, or expressions, or embodiments of the effects which inevitably and universally follow from given lines of conduct amongst human beings; they are large generalisations as to the action of mankind in all ages and all circumstances; in other words they are facts which have been observed and recorded by economical inquirers and students. To rail at these laws as heartless is to argue profound ignorance as to their real character and purpose. The law of gravitation is heartless; so oftentimes are the laws which govern the tides and the weather; so are moral laws. If a man violates or defies these laws they punish him, and they have no sympathy with him in his sufferings. So with regard to Political Economy. It simply declares to men that if they do such and such things, such and such results will follow; it does not say that they ought to do such and such things, or that they ought not to do them. That is beyond its province. Sympathy with the poor, and active efforts to ameliorate the condition of the poor, have their own proper sphere, and their appropriate modes of expression; but these lie within the region of morals and religion, far away from the domain of Political Economy. Many of the most insidious and pernicious errors of our times arise from the intermingling of morals and economics on the part of those who are too ignorant to discriminate betwixt the two. They chide Political Economy for not doing what it cannot do, what it never pretends to do, and

what it could not attempt to do without ceasing to operate scientifically; and on the other hand they endeavour to force morality to perform the functions of Political Economy, which is in the nature of things impossible. Morality is one thing; economics is another. They deal with different motives; they rule over distinct spheres; and they perform totally different functions. Each must do its own peculiar work if the work they do is to be effective, although they will naturally supplement, and co-operate with, each other. The laws of economics are no more moral precepts than are the laws of chemistry. The functions of science and of religion are absolutely distinct. It is the function of religion "to lay down practical precepts and to prescribe rules of life"; it is not the function of a science to do these things. Political Economy is no exception. Consequently it is no reproach to it that it does not do what it never professes to be able to do, and what it could not do if it tried—namely, to regulate the moral conduct of men with regard to one another. The new economists fall into the error of confounding economics with morals, and the error is as mischievous as it is irrational. This error vitiates the reasonings of the new economists upon almost every point. One of them informs us that the first principle of the new economists is "that Political Economy is not the science of wealth, but the science of man in relation to wealth." Well, even if this were true, it is not very new, for something of the same kind was said by Malthus; and Roscher said more than thirty years ago:—"The starting point and the object point of our science is man." This is very plausible, but it is also very fallacious. Of course it is true that Political Economy does in one sense deal with man; but it is also true that it deals with man rather as an animal than as a moral being. It relates almost exclusively to the secular affairs and the secular interests of man, and consequently it has most to do with those motives by which man is actuated in his business and in his commercial pursuits, and these motives are in the main selfish motives. With the higher part of man, his moral nature—that is his religion, his devotions, his aspirations towards purity and Godliness—Political Economy has nothing to do. It may be true, and of course it is true, that

man ought not to act exclusively with regard to his own self-interest, or to be selfish, and religion teaches him to be unselfish. But Political Economy deals with man as he is, and not as he ought to be. It finds that man is, as a matter of fact, in the main a selfish being, and that he will usually act, particularly as regards his daily pursuits, from selfish motives. It observes how men do act, and it states the results of its observations. This is the extent of its functions. To expect that Political Economy will ever make human beings unselfish is a vain dream.

Will Political Economy, or even Christianity itself, ever evolve a class of men who will not be selfish in the sense that they will do the best they can for themselves by their work or their business? If the new Political Economy can give the world a class of human beings who will work, and work at their best, from purely benevolent motives, that is with the sole motive of doing good to others than those who do the work, then it will succeed in doing what no system of morals or religion has ever done in the history of the world. But, of course, the idea that this can ever be done is the merest chimera.

What the new economists are mainly deficient in is common-sense. That is a defect which it is very difficult to cure. An old Welsh preacher was accustomed to say it was no disadvantage to men to be born without grace, simply because they could always obtain it; but if they were born without common sense the loss was a permanent one, inasmuch as they never could obtain that. So in like manner we may say that in the discussion and treatment of these practical work-a-day matters old-fashioned common sense is infinitely to be preferred to the phantasms and transcendentalisms of the new "economists." These gentlemen profess to be anxious to better the condition of the people generally. Good. But how do they propose to do it? By robbing one class to benefit others, by which means they would create insecurity, check production, and destroy capital. So that on their theory the less wealth there is in the country the better off the people will be! Common-sense says that the more capital there is in the country the better it will be for every citizen; that the more the increase of capital is hindered the worse it will be for every citizen; and that the true method

of elevating working men, the wise course of material progress, is to make as many workmen as possible capitalists. Again: these wiseacres say that labour—labour alone—creates wealth. It logically follows from this that if there is not wealth enough it is because there is not labour enough, or because what does exist is inefficient. Nevertheless, they would diminish the quantity of labour by an eight hours' day, and deteriorate its quality by rewarding inefficiency on the same scale as efficiency. Common-sense would dictate that if labour produces wealth, and produces it in the direct ratio of efficiency, then the most efficient producers, viz., the capitalist and the capable workman, ought to be encouraged in every possible way. But economical quacks, instead of taking this rational view, strive in every way to level the good workman down to the level of the bad one and to harass the capitalist out of existence altogether. A strong whiff of common-sense sent through the theories of these fanatics blows them to fragments. The new economists have plenty of ability, plenty of enthusiasm, plenty of courage; but they are alarmingly deficient in common sense. Happily, the English people are staid, practical, and sensible, and there is good hope that their common sense will save them from the economic, social, and political dangers which now threaten them, although they know very little about the Science of Political Economy.

BOOK IV.

THE TRUE SOLUTION OF
LABOUR PROBLEMS, ECONOMICAL
AND MORAL; OR THE WISDOM OF
PROFITING BY PAST EXPERIENCE.

"And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. . . . Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the prophets."

—*Jesus Christ.*

"He that loveth another hath fulfilled the Law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the Law. . . . Servants, be obedient to them that are masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening; knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with Him."

—*The Apostle Paul.*

CHAPTER I.

INDIVIDUALISM THE TRUE ANTIDOTE TO SOCIALISM.

INDIVIDUALISM may be defined as that condition of things under which the individual is free to develop his individuality, or to make the best of his own faculties, whether they be innate or acquired : in other words, under which the individual is left in full and undisturbed enjoyment of the rights and liberties which belong to him in virtue of his manhood and of his *status* as a citizen of a civilised community ; under which he can exercise, develop, and profit by, the gifts, faculties, talents with which he has been endowed by God, or which he may have acquired by study and labour ; under which the only restraint imposed upon his liberty by the State is the prohibition that he shall not interfere with the freedom or the rights of others, which is obviously necessary to secure the fullest possible measure of liberty to each and to all. Generally, Individualism is a condition of personal liberty and of personal ownership, as opposed to a condition of slavery in which a person is owned by others. Socialism is the exact antithesis of all this. It is that condition under which individuality is suppressed ; under which the individual is deprived of the rights and liberties which belong to him in virtue of his manhood and of his *status* as a citizen of a civilised community ; under which he *cannot* exercise, develop, or profit by, the gifts, faculties, talents with which he has been endowed by God, or which he may have acquired by study and labour ; under which all that he earns or produces is appropriated, and distributed for the general good, that is to say confiscated, by the State, which, by taking what he makes really takes what he is. Generally, Socialism is a condition of slavery as opposed to a state of liberty, in which a man is owned and governed not by himself but by others, and in which personal proprietorship, either of his personality or of his productions, is denied him. Indi-

vidualism is in harmony with the principles of human nature, with the laws of God, and with the experience of mankind from the earliest ages until now; and it is therefore moral, righteous, excellent, and worthy of being maintained and encouraged. Socialism violates the laws of God, and is in antagonism with the nature of man, and is pronounced both by the reason and experience of mankind to be immoral, unjust, and debasing, and is therefore unworthy of approval or acceptance.

Now it is the cardinal sin of Socialism that it wantonly assaults, and endeavours to destroy, the highest right of man—his supreme dominion over himself; the noblest power with which he has been endowed by his Maker; the right which is of all others most sacred and fundamental. It may be thought that this is a heavy accusation to bring against Socialism, and that it would be difficult to prove it to be true. Let us, therefore, listen to one or two of the lights of Socialism, Mr. Sydney Webb says: "The Socialists would nationalise both rent and interest by the State becoming the sole landowner and capitalist. Such an arrangement would, however, leave untouched the third monopoly, the largest of them all, the monopoly of business ability The more recent Socialists strike, therefore, at this monopoly also, by allotting to every worker an equal wage, whatever the nature of his work. This equality has an abstract justification, as the special ability or energy with which some persons are born is an unearned increment due to the influence of the struggle for existence upon their ancestors, and consequently, having been produced by society, is as much due to society as the unearned increment of rent." Mr. Sydney Oliviere, who is or was secretary of the Fabian Society, says:—"The ultimate refuge of the Individualist, the right of a man over his own body and capacities, is itself a large assumption, not necessarily admitted by Socialists." A Socialistic Congress, held at St. Gallen in 1888, passed a resolution which declared that "The Anarchistic theory of society, in so far as it aims at the autonomy of the individual, is anti-Socialistic." The plain English of all this is that Socialism would deprive a man even of the right "over his own body and capacities," that a man's abilities are not to be

recognised as belonging to him, but as belonging to society; and that consequently he would have no right under a Socialistic system to use those abilities for himself, and that they would be appropriated by the State, and the results produced by them divided by the society in general. Mr. Sydney Webb speaks of "monopolies of land, capital, and ability," and of all these monopolies levying toll upon labour. It would therefore seem that it is almost as great a sin in the eyes of the Socialists to be possessed of genius or extraordinary talent as it is to be a millionaire. It is difficult to form a conception of the mental condition of persons who can speak of a man as a monopolist simply because he possesses what he has obtained by the use of his own faculties, and who can represent him as levying toll upon labour in his capacity as a monopolist simply because he owns what he has himself made.

We must come to close quarters with this Socialistic theory that special ability, or talent, or genius, or even energy, belongs, not to the individual who may possess it, but to the society which produced him, and is therefore in the nature of "an unearned increment" which belongs, with all that it may yield, to society. It may be freely admitted that the Socialists have quite as strong a case against the rent of ability as they have against the rent of land or against the profits of capital, which is not saying much. They place all three on the same footing, and they demand that the State should appropriate them all on the common ground that individuals have no right to possess property in them.

Let [us] see what this involves. Obviously the Socialist contention is that eminent singers and musicians, artists and authors, lawyers and merchants, whose abilities or popularity command large payment, ought to be deprived of all they earn, the value of all that they have produced being thrown into the common treasury, out of which in return they are to receive precisely the same subsistence as is given to the most incompetent members of their several professions. Absolute equality of reward is to go hand in hand with the most varied inequality of merit. Every worker is to have "an equal wage, whatever the nature of his work." This is simply the notion of Proudhon that the

day's work of any one man is equal to the day's work of any other. And the basis of this idea is that A., who earns a large income and accumulates wealth by the judicious and diligent employment of eminent abilities, is a monopolist of talent, and that the surplus of his earnings is a toll on B. Mr. Sydney Webb refers to something which he calls "the toll levied upon labour by the monopolists of land, capital, and ability." So that not only the land-owner and the money-owner, but also the talent-owner, is plundering and battenning upon labour! All are alike thieves; and all alike are to be forced to yield up their ill-gotten possessions to the community!

Of course the foundation of this notion is as false as the notion itself is preposterous. It is absolutely untrue that a man who makes a large income or accumulates a great fortune by the exercise of his ability is doing any injustice to anyone or that he is taking what belongs of right to someone else. What he is paid for his services by those who desire and value them is absolutely his own, with which, so far as law or public opinion are concerned, he can do as he likes. Who is harmed by it? Nobody—but a number of curmudgeons and mediocrities who are racked by tortures of envy. But it is well that those who are disposed to play with Socialism should realise the significance of the dangerous contention that every person of exceptional ability is to be defrauded and penalised.

What would be the effect if the Socialistic method of valuing intellectual property and of distributing the results could be put into practice? Simply this, that there would very soon be no superior ability, extraordinary talent, or exceptional energy left to tax. Mediocrity, stagnation, barrenness, would everywhere prevail. Equality of remuneration would produce a dead level of monotony in the quality of labour. The Socialistic appropriation of "the rent of ability" would kill the ability itself and would dry up the springs of energy. Great artists would cease to paint, and great authors to write; popular singers and actors would refuse to put up with the manifold inconveniences of travel, and popular lawyers would no longer burn the midnight oil to get up their cases; eminent merchants and bankers would leave the anxiety and labour of making

money to others ; if they were severally no longer to enjoy what they had earned.

Of course such a system of treating intellectual workers would prove fatal to art, science, and literature ; but as Socialists profess to desire to return to the savage state, where none of these higher refinements or enjoyments are known or prized, this would not much matter to them. But it would matter to other people. Amid all the mists of sentiment which have been raised around this subject one solid fact remains, and that is that books have been written, poetry and music composed, pictures painted, buildings designed, great engineering works carried out, and great commercial enterprises conceived and achieved, chiefly by men and women who were working for bread and cheese, or for fame, or for position : that is to say their motives were self-regarding, and their objects more or less personal. Take away those motives, make it impossible for those ends to be attained, and the work will not be done. Egotism, not altruism, supplies the main motive power which drives the world along, not only in the lower realms of commerce, where material wealth is chiefly concerned, but also in those higher regions where intellectual workmen conceive and execute their great designs. Man is so constituted that self-love is the dominant motive of his nature. The great command of Christ recognises this when it bids him love his neighbour *as* himself, not less than himself or more, but equally with himself. Socialists in their infatuation imagine that they can improve upon the teaching of Christ, and compel man to love his neighbour *better* than himself. Even his Maker does not make such a demand upon him as that.

If, therefore, Socialists could carry out their preposterous doctrine and confiscate "the rent of ability," they would simply succeed in "killing the goose that lays the golden eggs." That is an operation which has been performed many times before by silly people, and the only qualification needed for performing it successfully is stupidity, which Socialists possess in a perfectly phenomenal degree. Society owes everything to men of genius and of exceptional talent, and whatever tends to deter such men from putting forth their best powers, is detrimental to the highest interests of

the community. Wealth, that is articles of utility and value, is produced, not by the dull mechanical manual labour of the many, but by the bright, keen, ingenious intellect of the few. The poor man among us to-day possesses more real wealth than the rich man did five hundred years ago. To whom is that due? Not to the effort or toil of the poor as a class, but to the original genius of a few specially-gifted men. Thinkers, inventors, organisers, designers; men of brains, capacity, and perception; these are the men who produce wealth, and thereby spread comfort and happiness throughout the land, making the lives of even the very lowest brighter and fuller than they have ever been before.

Lord Bacon has wisely said that "the empire of man over material things has for its only foundation the sciences and arts;" which is but another way of saying that man's dominion over Nature has been won, and is now held, by the mental energies of the greatest intellects of the race. We cannot perform the commonest actions in life, nor receive into our houses the cheapest commodities, without being indebted to the men of thought who have gone before us. Some genius discovered how to leaven bread, and in consequence every good housewife is a chemist to the extent that she understands that branch of chemistry. What must have been the discomforts and tortures of mankind before light bread could be procured? Who can calculate the immense value of the advantages which have been conferred upon the human race in the shape of increased health and happiness by the unknown discoverer of the art of leavening bread? Some other unknown genius invented the mariner's compass, and then a subsequent investigator discovered magnetism, and the application of magnetism to the compass has changed the face of the world. Before the mariner's compass was known long voyages were impossible; even afterwards, while the power of magnetism was unknown, such voyages were extremely hazardous. It is difficult for us to imagine a time when ships scarcely dared to leave the shore; but such a time there was. In Anglo-Saxon times a merchant who crossed the sea three times in his own craft became merely by virtue of that act a nobleman. The science of astronomy and the art of navigation would appear to an ignorant man to have no relation whatever; yet they

are so intimately related that without a knowledge of the former the latter would be impossible. A seaman, taking advantage of the principles brought to light by great mathematicians, is able to calculate his whereabouts on the wide ocean, though he may not have seen land for three months. What is the result of this? That the mariner has changed uncertainty for certainty, and has now no more dread of crossing the ocean than a landsman has of crossing a street. The sea has been mapped out until every vessel knows its track, and its times of arrival and departure can be stated almost as accurately as could those of a stage coach. Sir W. Herschell, illustrating the accuracy of the lunar observations of the mariner, mentions that Captain Basil Hall, without a single landmark during eighty-nine days, steered his ship into Rio harbour as straight as a coachman could drive a carriage into the yard of an inn. Out of this certainty in navigation, has sprung the whole of our shipping trade, through which we receive so many of our commodities. There is scarcely a house in the land, even among the humblest cottages, which does not contain some articles of utility which have come across the seas—tea, sugar, spices, fruits, clothing, provisions, &c., none of which could have been there but for navigation, and navigation could not have existed but for the mariner's compass. Hume has said: "We cannot reasonably expect that a piece of woollen cloth will be wrought to perfection in a nation which is ignorant of astronomy, or where ethics are neglected." What he meant was obviously this: that a people who do not study the arts and sciences, and endeavour to act in harmony with fundamental moral laws, can never become a great manufacturing nation. Equally true is it that they could not become great in agriculture, which also is manufacturing, and requires the aid of science to bring it to perfection. A modern farmer, to be successful, ought to understand chemistry, botany, natural history, &c. Thus are the theoretical and the practical, the real and the ideal, interwoven in our common daily life; thus does production depend upon invention and thought.

But this is not all. Still greater results have flowed from the action of astronomy and navigation in bringing together the uttermost ends of the earth. It has been shown that if

the mariner's compass had not been invented, America could not have been discovered; that if America, and the passage by the Cape had not been discovered, cotton could not have been brought to England. If cotton had not been brought to England we should of course have been without a very important part of our clothing; our great cotton industry could not have existed, and the millions of people employed in it could have found no work in this country; Lancashire would have been a purely agricultural county, and the British nation would have been poorer by hundreds of millions of pounds.

Again: the cotton industry has been made what it is to-day mainly by the genius and ability of a few men. For long after cotton was brought to this country the production of cotton goods was very meagre owing to defective machinery and imperfect processes of manufacture. One or two inventors changed all that. Richard Arkwright, a Preston barber, invented the spinning jenny. The effect of that one invention is that the cotton industry employs two millions of people instead of fifty thousand; that cotton, and therefore cotton goods, can be procured at about one-twentieth part of the former price; and that the annual value of the produce has risen from two hundred thousand pounds to scores of millions of pounds per annum. Through Arkwright's mental labours therefore no less than one million nine hundred and fifty thousand persons have directly received employment and subsistence; millions more have been indirectly benefited by having cheap clothing brought within their reach, thus increasing their cleanliness and comfort; whilst thousands of manufacturers have made large fortunes; and of course the nation generally has received all the advantages of this increase of production, diffusion of wealth, and cheapening of the necessities, comforts and conveniences of civilised life. Men like Arkwright deserve to be honoured by monuments of gold; Socialism would plunder and degrade them.

It is surely clear to the dullest mind that of all the world's workers those who do most to produce utility or wealth, to spread the advantages and conveniences of wealth, and to give employment to the labour of others, are the men of speculative minds, who deal with abstract ideas, and who

study to apply these abstractions and speculations to practical commerce and manufacture. We have seen how one inventor may set in motion the labour of millions of other people. Such men are the truest friends of the working classes. But how many miners reflect how much they owe to the safety lamp invented by Sir Humphrey Davy? Yet that simple invention, by reducing the danger to human life to a *minimum* in the mine, at once made the miner's occupation more pleasant and secure, and reduced the price of coals, thus indirectly stimulating all the industries to which coals are essential and also enabling the poor man to obtain a fire more cheaply. How many railway men reflect that if Watt had not invented the steam engine and Stephenson the locomotive there could have been no railways, and therefore no employment for them? Society in general, and the working classes in particular, owe practically everything that goes to make up wealth and happiness to intellectual workmen. More than sixty years ago it was calculated that the writings of Sir Walter Scott had given employment to a sufficient number of workmen in various countries, paper-makers, printers, and bookbinders, to people a large town if they could be gathered into one community. If this was true then, how much more true is it now? And what is true of Scott is almost equally true of Dickens, Mrs. Henry Wood, and other prolific writers. Josiah Wedgwood conceived the idea of reviving the designs of Grecian art in pottery, and the result was the establishment of the famous potteries at Etruria in Staffordshire. In a similar manner Sir Henry Doulton has produced the beautiful pottery ware associated with his name. Both these famous potters have provided employment for thousands of people. If the Socialists, by confiscating the "rent of ability," could stop the production of men of extraordinary intellectual gifts, the working classes would be the chief losers.

It is morally certain that the triumph of Socialism, carrying with it the confiscation of the rent of ability, would put a stop to the whole of that portion of production, that is the greater portion, which is due to Ability as distinct from Labour. There would then be no more Arkwrights or Mashams, or Watts, or Stephensons. There might be men of equal ability and genius, but they would have no

stimulus or encouragement to develop their powers, and therefore they would lie dormant. No tyrant or combination of tyrants could compel men of intellectual ability to put forth their best powers if they were denied the right of reaping the advantages of their endeavour. Men, especially men of the highest type, are so constituted that they will only yield the best fruits of their intellect when their roots are struck in the soil of freedom. Manual toil of an inferior kind may be whipped out of slaves; but the sweat of the intellect never. Under the natural and moral system of Individualism able men are free to make the most of their faculties for their own advantage (though they cannot do even this without advantaging others); the result is that they accumulate wealth, which they often use for wise and benevolent purposes, to the profit of the community. Under the unnatural and immoral system of Socialism able men would not use their ability; consequently the wealth which would have been created by its use would not exist; so that while the individual would remain poor the community would lose largely as well. Socialistic coercion would never produce the fruits of Ability.

We now proceed to deal with a higher phase of the subject, which affects the social and moral life and interests of men and women, just as the lower phase of it which we have just been considering chiefly affects their material well-being. Socialism, as was remarked in the early part of this chapter, wantonly attacks the most sacred personal rights of men and women. We have seen how it would deal with the right of men to their own capacities. Mr. Olivier intimates that "the right of man over his own body" is an assumed right which Socialists do not admit. Logically enough, the Socialists are prepared to push their principle to its extremest limits. They would deprive men and women of liberty even to fall in love with each other, or to marry, or to have children. Indeed, the marriage institution would be suppressed, and the family would cease to exist.

Motherhood, instead of being what God intended it to be, a sacred and responsible function, at once the expression and the gratification of the highest and holiest instincts of woman's nature, would be degraded to a mere

function of the State ; whilst fatherhood would be nothing more than a piece of animalism, the father having no recognised status at all in the Socialistic community. The mother would have no relation with the father of her child except an animal one, and probably more often than not she would not know who was the father of her child.

The teaching will appear to many to be abominable and loathsome (as it truly is), and they will have great difficulty in believing that such a body of men and women as the Socialists, who plume themselves upon both their intellectual and moral superiority, can propagate it.

It is a significant and a suggestive fact that all prominent Socialists, from Plato downwards, display a curious antipathy towards monogamy and loyalty to the marriage vow and a sinister preference for promiscuity in sexual relations. There is a deep-seated reason for this ; for Socialists instinctively realise that the marriage of one man to one woman, and the keeping of these two to each other, is the foundation of the family, and that the family is the mightiest bulwark in existence against the inroads of Communistic bestialism. Until they break down the family as an institution they will never succeed in setting up their promiscuous Free Love establishment ; and they will never succeed in breaking down the family institution, in this country at all events, while English men and women remain what they are, and while the religion of Christ retains its power.

“ To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty ”

is the Socialistic ideal of felicity. Under Socialism men would be like unto the brute beasts with respect to the unbridled indulgence of their carnal appetites ; they would be relieved from all the personal penalties which now attach to such indulgence ; there could be no immorality because there would be no morality ; the human animal would do as he or she liked, and shoulder off the consequences upon the community. Love, with its sacred idealism, its exhilarating emotions, its deep and swift self-revelation, its glorification of and its loyalty to its adored object, its unparalleled potency, would then be unknown ; for it would be substituted lust, sensual, bestial, debasing, corrupt.

Herd with many would take the place of marriage with one. The sexual relation, instead of being used for its Divinely-appointed and natural end of propagating the race, would be employed mainly for wanton debauchery, its natural end being frustrated either by the sterility of satiety or by the odious artifices of calculating regulation. Society, instead of being a congeries of families, each separate and distinct under its own heads, its members united to each other by ties of affection and fulfilling towards each other filial and fraternal duties and charities, would be a huge *caravanserai*, where every traveller would be practically unknown and unrelated to every other, where all relations would be temporary and terminable at will, where the only common tie existing would be that all alike were slaves, driven and oppressed by the tyrants at the head of the community. Under such Communism "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report," could have no place. The virtues, the refinements, the adornments of society would be trampled into the mire of this universal pig-sty; the rivers of truth and purity and beauty which now gladden and nourish society would be turned into common sewers; every little pond and puddle even would be a sink-hole of iniquity and corruption. Moral malaria, the miasma of degeneration, the poison of putrefaction would everywhere permeate and prevail, until the community, a rotting and loathsome mass, came to its natural and predestined end amid the execrations of Heaven and the acclamations of Hell.

Just try to imagine a state of society in which "men live with any woman they like;" in which children are taken from their mothers at birth and handed over to strangers; in which huge lying-in and nursery establishments are provided and all the operations of midwifery and nursing are performed under the direction of State inspectors, just as if cattle were being dealt with instead of human beings; and in which there is neither father, nor mother, nor home in any true sense of those words. Yet all these things were advocated by Plato. Can anything more hideous, more monstrous, more repulsive be conceived? That is Socialism,

morally and socially; that is the sort of community that it would create.

But is it modern Socialism? Can we make the Socialists of to-day responsible for what Plato the Pagan taught? The ideas of modern Socialists upon this subject are but the recrudescence of the ideas of Plato. Over and over again in the course of this work we have had to point out that all the ideas of Socialism are ancient errors revived. This is another case in point. Mr. G. Bernard Shaw, in a work on "Ibsen," refers to the time, "the happy time," when "the continuity of society no longer depends upon the private nursery," and when it "may be necessary that every able-bodied woman should be called upon to risk her life in childbed, just as it may be necessary that every man should be called upon to risk his life in the battlefield." What is this but Platoism over again? The abolition of the private nursery means the abolition of marriage. Children, it appears, are to be produced to order as required, and motherhood be made compulsory! Robert Owen did not believe in the marriage tie, and held that private or single family arrangements must come to an end. All children were to be given up to the State, as the parents were the very worst persons to bring up their own offspring. Mr. William Morris, the poet, says: "The present marriage system is based on the supposition of economic dependence of the woman on the man. This basis would disappear with the advent of Socialism, and *permanent contracts would become unnecessary*. We should have, instead, an association terminable at the will of either party." Bakunin said: "We declare ourselves atheistic, we seek the abolition of all religion, and the abolition of marriage."

Parenthood gone, the family broken down, the education and training of the children would of course be carried on by the State. Even the mother (the father is altogether out of the question) would have no control over their nurture and their teaching. According to Mrs. Besant, the education of children is altogether too important a matter to be left in the hands of the children's parents. Mr. Belfort Bax, at once quoting Gabriel Deville and speaking for himself, says: "To permit by religious practice the cerebral deformation of children is in reality a monstrous violation

of the liberty of conscience, which can only become effective after the proscription of what at present passes muster for religious liberty, the odious licence in favour of some to the detriment of all. The vampire, bourgeois liberty of conscience, must in short be impaled before true liberty of conscience can become a healthy living reality."

We again ask the reader to endeavour to picture to his mind a social state in which the sexual passion would have free play, unchecked by any sort of responsibility; in which there would be no true fathers or mothers, the status of the father being destroyed, and the function of the mother being a matter of State; in which the children belong to nobody, and yet to everybody, and are kept and educated entirely by the State. If the Devil could set up his hell upon this earth by any means, he would find no means of doing it so effectual as the machinery of Socialism; if the human race could be damned during the mortal state of its existence, even Satanic malignity need desire for it no damnation more accursed than this. The idea of such a state is indeed so revolting as to create in the mind of the average Englishman the idea that it can never be established in this country. Be not too sure of that. Consider how far we have already travelled in the direction of *State parentage*, and how ready many of our public men are to travel still further, and to feed and clothe children at the public expense. Logically, the end of all that is the condition of things advocated by Plato and the Socialists.*

The point which we have been considering is one of the most vital in this life-and-death controversy. Nowhere is the essential and irreconcilable antagonism between Individualism and Socialism more sharply defined than in relation to those primal passions and emotions which have to do with the love of one man for one woman, the procreation of offspring, and the establishment of the family for the training of children, as the result of that love. The family, which is the outcome of Individualism, is also its corner-stone. For the family exists the State; from the family is the State. This is the contention of Individualism.

* For fuller information on this aspect of the subject, see Appendix.

Socialism inverts the order, and says : From the State is the family ; for the State the family exists ; with the family the State can do what it wills. Nature, another name for God, has made the propagation of human life, that is the perpetuation of the race, dependent upon a unique individual action, which finds scope for its proper performance in the institutions of marriage and the family ; and in so doing Nature has erected an impregnable barrier against the system which would substitute the loathsome promiscuity of Communism for the pure relationships of family life. The power of fatherhood, the instinct of motherhood, the sweet purity of love and domestic existence—these are pristine and indestructible forces which ordain that the family must be supreme, the State subordinate, and against them the frothy waves of Socialism will beat in vain.

We have seen how Socialism would dwarf, and ultimately destroy, mental self-hood, by eliminating from human nature, as far as it is possible to do so, that vital and essential element of true manhood and womanhood—the power of judgment, of discrimination, of choice, of decision, by which power human beings are able to take their own way, choose their own lot, develop their own faculties, and make the best of themselves generally. Under Individualism that power has free play ; that is to say, the system of Individualism accords with the nature of man, and responds to his needs and his aspirations. Hence under it this essential element of manhood, freedom of choice and decision, is vitalised and developed, continually making the individual man or woman more perfect. Under the regulation, the drill, the uniformity of Socialism this faculty of discrimination and decision would, through non-use, shrivel and wither. It could not be killed outright, for it is the Divine spark in man that can never be put out ; but it could and would be dwarfed and palsied and incapacitated : which is to say that man would virtually cease to be man, would degenerate into a machine or an automaton, would be simply a shadow of his former great self.

Socialism and humanity are antagonistic ; either can conquer only at the other's expense ; the triumph of the

one necessarily carries with it the overthrow of the other. Mental self-hood would be atrophied under Socialism; only the lower animal organism would be left active and strong.

This will appear still more clearly when we consider that moral self-hood could not long survive under the materialistic conditions which Socialism would establish. Here we touch the innermost core of the subject. The glory of man is that he has within him somewhat of the Divine; the blessedness of man is that he can turn himself to, enjoy fellowship with, and find satisfaction in the Divine. This it is which, even more than his great powers of reason and intellect, differentiates him from the brutes and correlates him with his Heavenly Father. The highest right of man is the right to love, worship, and serve his God; his noblest liberty is freedom to serve and worship God according to the clearest light of his conscience. How would this right and privilege, most precious of all man's prerogatives, fare under Socialism?

Socialism is, essentially and by nature a system of coarse materialism, which, as it violates the moral law which God has written upon the human conscience as well as in His revealed Word, also, and therefore, "opposeth and exalteth itself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped." Whatever degrades man must dishonour God, for "we are His offspring"; whatever denies the highest within man must deny the highest without man. Socialism both denies God and debases humanity.

Socialism originates in intolerance, and exists by it, whereas Individualism originates in tolerance, and exists by that: Socialism would extirpate the highest and noblest personal rights of human beings, must extirpate them in order to ensure its own existence, whilst Individualism would preserve those rights intact, and is indeed bound to do so to preserve itself.

To sum up. To the Socialistic system we oppose Individualism. What is Individualism? It is that condition in which a man is free to make the most and the best of his individual talent, energies, and opportunities, without being checked and fettered by the State in those directions where he does not injure or interfere with the liberty and

the possessions of other people. As Kant says : " Every one may seek his own happiness in the way that seems good to himself, provided that he infringe not such freedom of others to strive after a similar end as is consistent with the freedom of all, according to possible general law." This is Individualism. In the words of the poet Thomson—

" Whatever freedom for ourselves we claim,
We wish all others to enjoy the same
In simple womanhood's and manhood's name!
Freedom within one law of sacred might—
'Trench not on any other's equal right.' "

CHAPTER II.

CHRISTIANITY *versus* SOCIALISM.

PERHAPS nothing has done such serious mischief in the community as the idea, vaguely entertained by some very excellent people, that Christianity, if it does not directly teach Socialism, yet in some way countenances it. Most of the people who hold this notion assume that Christianity is favourable to, and reconcilable with, the teachings of Socialists and Communists; and when a thing is assumed or taken for granted, it is not very likely that much careful inquiry will be made as to whether the assumption is correct or not. Hence it has come to pass that thousands of good Christian men and women who in their hearts abhor dishonesty have virtually joined hands with those who wish to thieve, and to thieve on a wholesale scale, and consequently are much more criminal and at the same time more dangerous to the community than common thieves are. Hence also we have the notion, which dimly floats before the mind of the community, that there must be something good and commendable at the bottom of Socialism after all. Of course the truth is that Socialism is as utterly opposed to the Scriptures as it is to reason and common-sense; that Christianity is Individualistic to its very core; and that its principles are fundamentally and irreconcilably opposed to the perverted and immoral ideas which constitute the very warp and woof of Socialism. If the semi-Socialistic Christians referred to would but take the trouble to thoroughly examine the book by which they profess to shape their conduct, namely, the New Testament, they would find that it is impossible to accept that book and the teachings of Socialistic iconoclasts at the same time. It is impossible to serve Jesus Christ and Karl Marx. We must make our choice betwixt the Mammon of Socialistic unrighteousness and the exalted aims of a God-inspired Individualism. We cannot accept and serve both.

No error is so dangerous as half truth, and the small modicum of truth which Christian Socialists (so-called) have got hold of, and which they pervert with such fervid ingenuity, is precisely the thing which makes their conduct a peril to the nation. Because the Jewish law curbed the greed of property owners in various directions, and displayed a divine tenderness towards the poor ; because Jesus Christ taught that the relations between the rich and the poor ought to be brotherly, and told the rich ruler to go and sell all that he had and give to the poor ; and because the infant Christian Church at Jerusalem had all things in common—it is therefore assumed that there must be some affinity betwixt the Christian Church and those social movements which attack all ownership of property, which consider it a crime to be rich and a virtue to be poor, and which would turn things upside down by degrading the richest down to the position of the poorest, and reducing everybody to a dead level of poverty and misery. This is a mere assumption, however. Sympathy with the poor is one thing ; robbing the rich to give to the poor is quite another thing. If Christianity were what some of its Socialistic adherents represent it to be, its most enthusiastic votaries might well despair of its ever achieving conquest over other religions and diffusing its healing influence throughout the world. For no race of human beings, not even the lowest, would accept a system of religion which denuded the individual of his manhood and his independence, which prevented him from appropriating that which he had himself produced, and which placed the industrious on a par with the idle, and the capable on the same plane as the incompetent. The worst foes of Christianity have ever been those of its own household. In the theological realm the pure and simple religion of Jesus Christ has been overlaid and smothered by the creeds, traditions, and philosophies of men, so that any man who wishes to find Apostolic Christianity, and commences his quest in the churches, will have to dig through mountains of rubbish before he can discover the true faith and the true church. What has happened on the doctrinal side of Christianity is now being repeated as regards its social side. Here again, we have the plain, practical, and rational teachings of the New Testament either completely hidden under

cartloads of Socialistic rubbish, or cunningly perverted and made vehicles for conveying meanings precisely opposite to those which they were intended to convey. As Christianity, in the dark ages, was made to suffer in the estimation of reasonable and intelligent people by the hair-splitting and the fictions of theologians, so in these professedly enlightened times it is to be made to suffer in the estimation of the same class of people by foisting upon it the crude, crooked, and criminal teachings of atheistic Communists. The wise seeker after Christian truth will not search for it in the impure and muddy streams of Sectarianism or of Socialism, but will go direct to the fountain-head, the New Testament itself, and read and judge according to his own light and his own convictions. There he will find the Truth, unembellished and unadulterated, and by that truth he may unerringly walk in the straight path of Christian integrity. The Carpenter of Nazareth, poor man as He was, and also the poor man's Friend, was no Socialist, and Socialism will yet be ground to powder by the mills of God which He set in motion. The Gospel of Jesus Christ will triumph alike over the corruptions of priest-craft and the criminalities of State-craft.

In the previous chapters we have defined the nature of Socialism and set forth its aims; we have shown that its spirit is one of rancorous envy towards the rich, and that it would render the position of the poor intolerable; that it would be fatal to all the higher qualities of manhood, and would be a blight upon the nation, destroying all capital and commerce, and rendering labour unproductive; that it proposes to use violent and revolutionary means in order to despoil the propertied classes, and put an end to the existing organisation of society; and that until it is strong enough to resort to force its strategy is to induce unintelligent working men to use their political power as an engine for confiscating the possessions of the wealthy, and for crushing out the freedom of industry, and thereby crippling and paralysing commerce. No such Socialism as this is taught in the Bible. We challenge any Socialist to quote a passage from the Scriptures which gives him, or a majority who think with him, the right to deprive me of that which is mine, either because I have myself produced it or because

it was given to me by those who did produce it. The very spirit and essence of socialism is that it proposes to infringe the fundamental rights of individuals. It is all a question of property. If there were no property involved we should hear nothing of Socialism, which has its very origin in the desire of certain people to possess themselves of what belongs to certain other people. What loftiness or nobility is there about this? It is mean, despicable, and ignoble to the last degree. All the rhetoric used by Socialists to embellish their programme will not disguise its mercenary and sordid character. It is a mere piece of brigandage, the brigands using (for the present) violent and inflammatory speeches instead of gunpowder and dynamite. That these political bandits should coolly ask us to believe that they have the Bible on their side is to add insult to injury.

It may be remarked in passing that it is a great misfortune that we cannot pin Socialists down to a definition of what they mean by Socialism. At present they are able to shelter themselves under vague generalities, and if they are driven from one position they are able to take their stand upon some position quite different. They run off into talk about Socialism in the Post Office, Socialism in the Poor Law, in Education Acts, in Factory Acts, &c., altogether ignoring the fact that these measures, whatever may be said for or against them, are quite distinct in their nature from the measures which Socialism proposes ultimately to secure. It is a truism that the State can do some things better than they can be done by individual enterprise, as in the Post Office and the Education Acts for example, and also that the State is within certain limits bound to protect the young and the helpless and the destitute, as it does in the Factory Acts and the Poor Law. But all these things can be done, and are done, without robbing the individual of that which is his own, or depriving him of his liberty, or suppressing the motives which induce men to put forth their utmost exertions in labour, and to carry on the operations of trade and commerce. Nobody knows better than Socialists themselves that there is a stupendous and fundamental difference between such State action for the general good as that which we now have in this country and such

State action as they propose to secure. With them Socialism means the dissolution of society as it now exists ; the abolition of private property in land and all things besides ; the ownership of all property in common—or Communism ; the destruction of individual freedom and the placing of the most learned and able in a position of equality with the most ignorant and incapable ; and therefore the annihilation of the motives which prompt men to labour, to exchange, and to accumulate, and to carry on commerce, none of which things would be done if these motives ceased to operate. A nation Socialistic, and a nation intellectually great and commercially prosperous, is a contradiction in terms.

It was remarked just now that a seeker after truth, whether on religious or social subjects, would do well to consult the New Testament direct. Let us, therefore, go to that book for an example of true Socialism. Of the infant Church at Jerusalem we read :

“ And all that believed were together, and had all things common ; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, as every man had need.” (Acts ii. 45-56).

“ And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul : neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own ; but they had all things common. . . Neither was there any among them that lacked : for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles’ feet : and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.” (Acts iv. 32-34).

Now let this language be carefully noted. Be it observed in the first place that these things are affirmed only of believers, or disciples of Christ. It is obvious that what would be proper enough in a community of believers would be highly improper in a promiscuous community. What was the motive which impelled these believers to act as they did ? Was any law passed bidding them so to act ? Certainly not. Their action was purely voluntary ; there was no compulsion brought to bear even upon believers. Let it be noted again that the individual ownership of property, not only of houses, but of land, was recognised, for people who

possessed these things are said to have sold them. Even of these it is not said that they sold all their possessions, and the probability is that many of them did not. Of Ananias and Sapphira it is explicitly stated that they sold "a possession," and not all their possessions. Peter said to Ananias, "While it remained, was it not thine own? And when it was sold, *was it not in thine own power?*" This seems to indicate that even after these people had parted with their possessions they did not lose absolute control over them; the community that was established was apparently one of use, and not of possession. At all events, it is quite clear that even after Ananias and Sapphira had sold their property, they were quite at liberty to dispose of the proceeds as they liked. Nicolaus Von Strassburg is quite in error when he says in reference to the words "mine" and "thine": "These words were not in Christendom at first, where all earthly things were in common to them, but to each as his necessity required, not according to caprice and lust. Therefore they lived together in concord as if they had only one heart and one soul. This was to us a pattern of peace and Christian perfection." No man could have missed the mark more completely than Von Strassburg does. His interpretation of the Communism (not of the Early Christian Church, for there was nothing of the kind in the Church generally) of this Church at Jerusalem is utterly false and absurd. While he states that the early Christians did not use the words "mine" and "thine," the Apostle Peter said to and of Ananias—"While it remained was it not *thine* own? And when it was sold was it not in *thine own power?*" Not only "thine," mark; but "thine own." What could more explicitly describe individual ownership?

All this, however, is but the mere fringe of the subject. Let us probe a little deeper. This New Testament incident clearly teaches us that true Socialism begins with the man himself, causes him to look at and into his own self, and to say to his fellow man: "All mine is thine." That is the Socialism we have in the passages just quoted. Contrast with this the false Socialism which is now advocated among us by the followers of Rousseau, Proudhon, Lassalle, and Marx. This false Socialism looks away from the man in whose heart it takes its rise, and begins with some other

man, to whom it says: "All thine is mine." True Socialism gives all; false Socialism grasps all. The one is the expression of brotherhood; the other is the expression of unbrotherhood. One is spiritual, and is the offspring of love, by which it is ruled; the other is political, the offspring of envy, and is ruled by greed. One trusts in moral means for the attainment of its ends; the other in its more reputable form relies upon legal means, and in its less reputable form upon lawless and violent methods. One seeks to drive people into compliance with its demands by compulsion; the other relies entirely upon the voluntary principle, and endeavours to draw people towards its own ideal. True Socialism preserves, and at the same time ennobles and perfects, Individualism; false Socialism degrades, and, as far as it is possible to do so, destroys it. One is truly social, because it makes what each possesses to be really the property of all, to be held and used for the common good; the other is anti-Social, because it is at the bottom selfish and destructive, because it is opposed to those laws upon which the welfare of the individual and of society alike depend. What have these two forms of Socialism in common? Nothing. One is the antithesis of the other. These Jerusalem Christian Socialists in no way interfered with their neighbour's property or freedom. They did not seek to have any law enacted which would have placed the possessions of other people at their disposal. They used their own freedom, and dealt with their own property, instead of seeking freedom to deal with the property of other people. There is nothing to prevent any number of Socialistic communities similar to that at Jerusalem being started among us at any time; for they could be started without doing any injury whatever except to the persons who composed them. Let those who wish to practise Socialistic doctrines withdraw themselves from the general community, and form themselves into communistic societies apart from everybody else, and nobody will say them nay. But is this what they desire? Would it suffice them? And if not, why not?

Let it not be supposed, however, that this experiment at Jerusalem was a successful one. Had it been so it probably would have been imitated. But it never was imitated by

any other church in the Apostolic age. That is a significant fact. Equally significant is the fact that not one of the Apostles commended this action of the Church at Jerusalem, or recommended any other church to do likewise. There is good reason to believe that this Communistic experiment at Jerusalem caused the chronic poverty of the Christians in that city. It is certainly remarkable that the one church which went through this foolish and disastrous experience was the church for the relief of which all other churches in the early Christian world were called upon to contribute. So that, although we see Socialism at its best in the case of this Apostolic community of believers, we also see that the best form of Socialism failed to achieve the objects for which it was used, and simply resulted in the impoverishment of everybody concerned in it. Moreover, it had a distinctly bad effect upon Ananias and Sapphira, and led to a terrible exercise of autocratic power on the part of Peter the administrator. How should we like a community in which death was awarded for lying? Besides all this, disputes broke out about the sharing of the property, and led to the dissolution of the community. Human nature was too much even for the Apostles. Socialists are welcome to extract what comfort they can out of this instance. It was a limited and local experiment, but within the limits and the locality covered by it, its effects were distinctly mischievous; if a similar experiment could be tried upon a national scale, the effects would be equally disastrous so far as that nation was concerned. This, mind you, is Christian Socialism, pure and exalted in its spirit, lofty and benevolent in its aims, and voluntary in its methods. What, then would be the probable effects of Atheistic Socialism, immoral and corrupt in its spirit, sordid and malevolent in its aims, and using violent and revolutionary means?

A while ago we used the term "Christian Socialists," and we almost owe the reader an apology for so doing. For there is, and can be, no such thing as a Christian Socialist, if the word Socialist be used in its strict and proper sense, *i.e.*, to denote one who believes in, and advocates, the abolition of private property, the nationalisation of land, and the collectivisation of capital. It would be just as reasonable to employ the terms "Christian tyrant," "Chris-

tian oppressor," "Christian slave owner," "Christian pirate," "Christian brigand." The one term is the negation of the other. So is Socialism the negation of Christianity. If we would only call things by their proper names, how much self-deception we should avoid! By what authority do preachers of Christianity, whether they be Cardinals, Bishops, Canons, Curates, or Nonconformist ministers, undertake to make the religion of Christ responsible for the crudities, the absurdities, and the wickednesses of Socialism? By no authority but their own. They have no warrant whatever for their conduct in the New Testament. Therefore, let no man, especially no Christian, give heed to them on this matter; but throw back their heretical teaching in their faces, and brand them as impostors and corruptors of Christian truth. Talk about schism? What schism is half so censurable as that of the men who teach that Christianity sanctions theft and injustice and tyranny? Heretics in practice, schismatics in conduct, are these, who deny the plainest teachings of the Lord, and do dishonour to the nature of man. But happily there is that in every man's conscience which gives them the lie; for every man who has "conscience toward God" knows that it is wrong for others to deprive him of his own; and no amount of preaching will ever convince him otherwise. The human conscience, the unsophisticated intellect of man, the experience of all ages, are all, equally with the Word of God, opposed to Socialism and its teachers.

"Christian Socialism" is very active in England. But the movement now thus denominated is entirely different from that which was known under the same name in the time of Frederick Denison Maurice and Charles Kingsley. Those men were Christian social reformers, not Christian Socialists; for whilst they condemned competition, and wished to substitute for it co-operation both in production and distribution, they did not advocate the abolition of private property and the appropriation of land and capital by the State; nor could they have looked with anything but abhorrence upon the filthy and beastly teaching of modern Socialists with regard to marriage and the family. What concord hath Canon Scott-Holland with Canon Kingsley? Or Archdeacon Farrar with F. D. Maurice?

Or Stewart Headlam and Canon Shuttleworth with Thomas Hughes?

The "Christian Socialist" Society proclaims its objects as being the "substitution of a system of production for use for the present system of production for profit, the organisation of society on a basis of industry and moral worth rather than of wealth, privilege, and monopoly, as at present; industry being understood to comprise both mental and manual work: the public control of land, capital, and all means of production, distribution, and exchange, involving the abolition of all interest. In an advertisement which appeared in *The Church Reformer*, in January, 1883, a journal called *The Christian Socialist* was described as "the official organ of the Christian Socialist Society" and as "a journal for those who work and think, which, while maintaining the Christian spirit upon which the teachings of Maurice and Kingsley were based, does not hesitate to advance the principles of Socialism with all the significance which has been added to that term by the patient economic investigations of such men as Lassalle, Karl Marx, and Henry George." And for these crazy ideas Jesus Christ and His religion are made responsible; for the "Christian Socialists" say that their ideal is found in Christ. Of course, reasonable and righteous men, in so far as they believe the Christian religion to be faithfully represented by Socialists, are estranged from that religion. If the Church of Christ is to be identified with the folly and the fraud of Socialism, its doom is sealed; its Founder would Himself disown and curse it.

There is grave reason to complain of lack of explicitness in the utterances of Christian teachers upon this whole question. Like the politicians they play fast and loose with the word Socialism, now using it in one sense and then in another, always shrinking from definition, so that it is impossible to nail them down to any even meaning. Everything is left in a nebulous state, so that each man selects whatever sense of the term may suit him. This is a form of deceit and fraud to which Christians ought not to stoop. They, above all men, should say what they mean and mean what they say; their yea should be yea, and their nay, nay; they should leave it to other disputants to palter

with a double sense. When they wish merely to condemn social wrongs and inequalities which are palpably unjust and indefensible, and which can be remedied with benefit to some and without injustice to any, they should make it clear what they do condemn and why they condemn it. When they advocate social reforms, they ought to describe the nature and limits of those reforms, and not fly off at a tangent and proclaim themselves Socialists when they are not, and have no intention of being, anything of the kind. It is necessary to always discriminate between Socialists and Social Reformers; for the latter are the friends of Progress, whilst the former are its enemies.

It is certain that the ministers and members of Christian Churches who accept Socialism in its entirety form an inconsiderable proportion of those who are connected with these institutions. But they are an active and aggressive section, ready to trade alike upon the benevolence of their Christian brethren towards the poor or to co-operate with Atheists in order to achieve their objects, and therefore their influence is out of all proportion to their numbers. The serious and sufficient fact, however, is that there are Christian men and women, not a few of whom are preachers and teachers, who are avowed, ostentatious, militant, Socialists—Socialists in the sense that they accept the full programme of the Social Democratic Federation. Whether they are few or many is a fact which is relatively insignificant. As these people are usually of more than average intelligence we must assume that they know what they are doing; that they have embraced Socialism deliberately, with full knowledge of its nature and of its certain consequences; and that they are prepared to take the full responsibility of their action. Nevertheless, it would appear necessary to ask whether they have, after all, considered the matter all round, and realised what is involved in their acceptance of Socialism and in their attempts to exalt it to a position scarcely inferior to that of the Gospel itself.

Certain, even, of the "Christian" Socialists are getting a little uneasy with respect to some of the ultimate developments of Socialism, especially as regards marriage and family life. Even the gorge of the Rev. Stewart Headlam rises at

the teachings of the "scientific" Socialists on this subject, and he has proved that he can swallow a good deal that other people would think nauseous. In the *Church Reformer* for January, 1887, Mr. Headlam, while avowing his willingness to co-operate with all Socialists, even with Atheists, felt constrained to put some very anxious and pointed questions to those of the "scientific" school. He said: "Unless we 'have misunderstood the statements of some of the leaders 'of the so-called Scientific Socialists, there will be very soon 'a wide gulf between us and them. Mr. Marson, in an 'article in the December number of *To-day*, entitled "'Christian Socialism *versus* Satyr Socialists,' has we think 'made it fairly clear that on the sexual question the Christian 'Socialists will have to part company with some of their 'Scientific friends, though we do not think he has proved 'that either the Democratic Federation or the Socialist 'League are formally committed to the teaching which he 'so righteously and vigorously denounces.

"On the other hand, Mr. Hyndman in a lecture at the 'Athenæum Hall on Sunday, December 19th, on 'Socialism 'and the Ten Commandments,' threw contempt on the 'Fifth Commandment (quite ignoring by the way its bold 'assertion against private property in land), and spoke of 'the 'cant talked about the family life—man after all being 'but the highest animal, and there being no family life 'among cats and dogs, &c.' At the same time he claimed 'the right and urged the duty of the State now in many 'cases to take children from their parents; a remark which 'caused a man in the audience, who apparently had strong 'sympathy with Mr. Hyndman's economic teaching, to call 'out —'If you come and take away my kid, Mr. Hyndman, 'I can tell you I'll shoot you.' Now we are quite at one 'with Mr. Hyndman and all others when they show how 'utterly marred and broken the family life is at present; we 'are eager to advocate every change in laws or customs 'which will tend to put women on an equality with men; we 'know how bad the relation of the sexes is at present; but 'what we want to know is, what is the ideal sexual relation- 'ship at which our Scientific friends are aiming—or if they do 'not like it to be put like that, what kind of relationship 'between the sexes will they tolerate? It is idle for them to

"say that they cannot tell what will happen in the future, "that society is evolved, and so forth; certainly we have "been evolved into our present condition, against which "these men are fighting nobly; let them tell us what must be "the relation between the sexes which will satisfy them, "against which they will not fight. If they will tell us this "we shall know where we are. . . . If these men mean "that their ideal is promiscuous intercourse between free "men and free women, or that the State in the future should "select men and women for the purpose of breeding children, "and that indeed the Fifth Commandment should be useless, "for that no child could know its own father, then indeed "there is a vast difference between Christian Socialists and "other Socialists. And then indeed also we venture to say, "the economic revolution will be delayed indefinitely.

"Nothing, as far as we know English people of all sorts, "but especially those whom the Socialists try to reach, "would so prejudice the reception of Socialist doctrines as "that they should be mixed up with sexual teaching of this "sort. We may have misunderstood Mr. Hyndman's teaching "on the matter, we hope we have, and that at any rate Mr. "Champion and the Democratic Federation and Socialist "League will speak out plainly so that we may know how we "stand. In any case it becomes of prime importance that "Christian Socialists should press forward their work and "keep the sacred cause clear from this corruption."

We have not heard that any response was made to Mr. Headlam's appeal, or that he ever received any satisfactory assurances in answer to his inquiries; but we know that the "Scientific" Socialists have not in any way modified their teachings on these matters, and that they are not likely to do so. Christians who continue to toy and parley with Socialism do so with their eyes open; they know what it involves.

It now remains to glance briefly at the positive teaching of Christ and his Apostles upon the subject. And firstly, it may be remarked that the nature of the Christian religion is such as to afford a strong antecedent probability that it would be antagonistic to Socialism. The whole genius of that religion is individualistic. If any man ever stood alone in this world, lived a life apart from his fellows, was

conscious that all existing social conditions were against him, and set himself to oppose and overthrow those conditions, that man was the Founder of Christianity. What is His example, therefore, but the most signal and splendid illustration of Individualism that has ever been seen in human history? He was One Man against the world; and He conquered it.

Moreover, no other Teacher ever recognised and emphasised the dignity, the value, the importance of the individual as Jesus Christ did. It was He Who said: "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over *one sinner* that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance;" Who spake the parable of the Prodigal Son; Who graciously accepted the devotion of that "woman of the city" who was a "sinner;" Who commended the humble publican and condemned the proud Pharisee; Who everywhere perceived and exalted personal worth. Never was there a Teacher who so penetrated to the heart of things; who so ruthlessly stripped men of the trappings of wealth and rank and gazed at their naked spirits: never one who took so little account of the many and made so much of the few, or who so despised popular applause and support. He never counted heads, or solicited votes, or asked men to be His disciples. In His magnificent solitariness He taught the truth, and left it to plough men's hearts, test their characters, and divide them into the good and the evil, fructifying the lives of the one class, blasting the lives of the other. In His method of choosing His Apostles His Individualism stands out grandly. He did not advertise or appeal; nor seek the patronage of the rich, the religious, the exalted. He saw Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom, and Peter and James and Andrew fishing, and in his simple, commanding way said: "Follow Me," and they, recognising His Divine mandate, "left all and followed Him." And the men He chose were the very last men that the organised religionists, the Socialists of the day, would have thought of. It is inconceivable that such a Teacher should give any sanction to Socialism.

As a matter of fact, secondly, He has not done this. From beginning to end there is nothing in His doctrine that contains any germ or even suggestion of Socialistic

teaching; nor can anything be discovered in His conduct that has such a tendency. A Poor Man, and pre-eminently the Friend of the poor, He yet uttered no word of envy respecting the rich; and the one sin against which He most persistently warned His disciples was covetousness. He formulated no system of social philosophy; propounded no doctrine of equality; advocated no new scheme as to the distribution of wealth. Evermore He taught that the things of this world, even when largely possessed and rightly employed, were of small account. Whatever He preached He practised. His Apostles were of His spirit; they taught the same truths; they lived the same life.

The fact that Jesus and His Apostles had a common fund, though it is often adduced in support of Communism, really proves nothing; unless it can also be proved that the example of the Apostles in forsaking their homes and occupations is binding upon us. But that would be contrary to reason. For what state of things should we have if every person who believed in Christ were to turn his back upon his previous avocation, his home, and his friends? Besides, some of these same Apostles had private property, and were indeed in comfortable circumstances. It is evident, moreover, that some of the intimate friends of Jesus, like the sisters Mary and Martha, were comparatively wealthy; for on one occasion he was anointed with "genuine and exceeding costly" perfume, worth about ten pounds in our money. The incidental statement that Lazarus was buried in a tomb hewn in the rock suggests that the family must have been one of wealth and position. Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, Nathaniel, Zaccheus, and the Apostle John, clearly were not poor men. In Apostolic times there were believers in the Imperial household at Rome; Joanna, the wife of Chusa, Herod's steward, was a Christian; Lydia, the first European convert, was the head of a profitable business; and it is evident from certain incidental touches in the Epistles to the Corinthians that some of the members of the church at Corinth were wealthy.

With regard to the direct teaching of Christ, it is entirely and unmistakably against Socialism. His treatment of the rich young landowner who came to Him for counsel has been much perverted in the interest of false economics.

To this inquirer, evidently sincere and earnest, Christ said : "Go : sell all thou hast, and give to the poor, and follow Me." Why? Because that man's besetting sin was covetousness, greed, avarice ; and because the only radical cure for that disease was the renunciation of all earthly wealth. Christ's saying was at once a revelation of the man's character and of the only means of his regeneration. Whilst he hugged his lands and his gold as the chief good he could never know salvation. Had he been equal to obeying Christ's great command he would have proved himself to be a new man, and would have escaped the clutches of the one sin that could damn, and double damn, him, even to the lowest hell. But he was not equal to the heroic act of renunciation required : "He went away sad and sorrowful, for he had great possessions." The command given to this young aristocrat was unique ; it was the prescription of the Great Physician for a specific moral disease ; the one method of salvation for a given type of character. Men who acquire wealth only for its own sake, and who use it simply upon themselves, are better without it, both on their own account and in the interests of society. It is better that such men should lose all they possess than lose themselves. This is the teaching of Christ ; it is also the dictate of common-sense.

But did Christ command all rich men who came to Him to get rid of their wealth and bestow it upon the poor? Did He ever give such a command to any man besides this one? No. The significance of this fact is obvious. If He had required all rich men to make themselves poor the result would have been that none would have been rich and all poor ; for if all existing wealth were to be redistributed it would be insufficient to make anyone wealthy. But whilst the process of redistribution was going on a premium would be put upon idleness and improvidence, inasmuch as a large proportion of mankind will never work while they have even a single day's subsistence in hand. If Christ had given to all rich men the command which he gave to this particular one He would have been attempting to do precisely what the Socialists are seeking to accomplish, to subvert the very foundations of society and to sink mankind into abject poverty and misery.

Just consider what an opportunity the application of this rich young ruler gave to Jesus to propound new doctrines on the ownership and occupation of land, and to denounce private property, had He been disposed to do so. Did He do anything of the kind? On the contrary. He did not even tell this man to divide his landed estates among a number of other men: what He did tell him to do was to sell his land, transfer it to the possession of another private owner, and dedicate the purchase money to the relief of the poor. This was distinctly countenancing private ownership, even of land. But this is not all. A still more favourable opportunity for condemning private ownership presented itself to Christ when—"One out of the multitude said unto Him, Master, bid my brother divide the inheritance with me. But he said unto him, Man, who made Me a judge or a divider over you? And He said unto them, Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness." This was a family dispute about property, a paltry affair which did credit to none of the parties concerned, and in which our Lord declined to interfere. He may have thought both parties in the wrong, but he did not even condemn wrongful possession; he simply referred the disputants to the judge whose business it was to equitably decide such matters. For the benefit both of these particular persons and of all others, however, He draws from the incident a great moral lesson: "Take heed; beware of covetousness." Thus He struck at the root, not only of this dispute, but of all similar ones. But He preached no Socialism, propounded no schemes for the reconstruction of society; on the contrary He once again emphatically sanctioned private ownership. There can be no doubt that if Christ were now upon the earth, and He were to be approached by workmen who should say: "Master, speak to our employers, and bid them more fairly divide the profits with us;" or by employers who should say—"Master, speak to our workmen, and bid them be content with a smaller share of the proceeds of industry:" He would reply to both parties alike—"Who made Me a judge or a divider over you? beware of covetousness. Let neither side attempt to grasp too much; let both be just." What Christ would have done, that ought His ministers and disciples to do. Their duty is to expound and enforce

the great moral principles which underlie these disputes, and to which both sides are under obligation to conform; but they should never be active participants in these disputes themselves, and still less ought they to resort to the unworthy acts of the demagogue in order to invoke the power of public opinion against one side or the other. The striking contrast which exists between the action of Jesus on these social matters and the conduct of some modern Christian ministers who claim to be the purest exemplars of His spirit is a lamentable proof of the apostate condition of the Christian Church.

The parable—or incident—of Dives and Lazarus has been grossly misinterpreted in the interests of Socialism. It is claimed that Christ here taught that the mere possession of wealth is sinful; that it was the sin of being rich, and no other, which ruined Dives. But if Dives was lost because he was rich, Lazarus was saved because he was poor; hence the only way of salvation is through poverty; it is therefore infinitely better to be poor than rich; consequently to attempt to better the condition of the poor is to seek their eternal ruin. If this is the truth of the matter, why do not Socialists, at all events "Christian" Socialists, rest content with their lot and leave the rich alone? One of their number, "Father" Benson, says: "Think not that poverty is the great eye-sore of our city; if we were all poor together we might have God's blessing on our penury; *the great eye-sore of London is your accumulated wealth. If a man can have no crime imputed to him save this—that he has accumulated riches in the bank: that alone is sin enough to send him to hell.*"* Behold the spirit of "Christian" Socialism! Contrast its bleary-eyed, raging envy, with the calm spirit and the wise and gentle teaching of Christ. Why do Mr. Benson and the rest of them strive to ameliorate the condition of the poor if penury is the condition which God blesses and affluence the sin which He curses and visits with damnation? These men are hypocrites, whited sepulchres, for they say and do not, or they do not as they say: their teaching is as rank an abomination in the eyes of God as it is repulsive to the reason of man.

* *The Church Reformer*, April 15, 1884.

If the possession of wealth is "sin enough to send a man to hell," how came Abraham into heaven? He was a rich man, probably richer than Dives himself; how then could he, of all men, tell Dives that he was damned because he was rich? Clearly the teaching of this parable, the only possible lesson that can be drawn from it, is that Dives was lost because of his avarice, his selfishness, his inhumanity towards his poorer neighbours. That was his sin, as it is the sin of multitudes to-day; but it is a sin which is not confined to the rich, and that can equally be manifested by the poor; though, of course, it is more flagrant, less subtle, in the case of the rich. The crying sin of Christendom to-day is covetousness; the luxury, the ostentation, the wantonness, the gluttony, the self-indulgence, of some among the wealthy classes, combined with stony-hearted callousness towards the suffering and oppression of the sick and the poor and the needy: the envy, and consequent evil passions and desires, which the preachers of hatred, malice, and uncharitableness stir up, in some of the poor against men richer than themselves. These are the things which, on the one side or the other, like a millstone drag the soul down to the nethermost hell. Aristotle said two thousand years ago that the evils of civilised life were not caused by the system of private property and free exchange, but by the depravity of human nature, and this is true to-day. The evils from which we suffer are not caused by the private ownership of wealth, but by the misuse of it by wicked men. Wickedness, however, can never be cured by politics; it is moral, and it can only be reached by moral remedies. Socialism can never extirpate it; but Christianity can.

Christianity is never antagonistic to common-sense; it is the apotheosis of common-sense. It is common-sense perfected, sublimated, sanctified; it is reason exalted, purified, glorified; it is the true rationalism, the Divine wisdom. It is opposed neither to the acquisition, nor the possession, nor the enjoyment of wealth. "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to *give* to him that hath need." There could be neither stealing nor giving where private property did not exist. Whilst Christianity

does not make this life the be-all and the end-all, it both permits and enjoins the enjoyment of it within rational limits. "The Son of man is come eating and drinking." At the marriage festival in Cana, and at the "great feast" in Levi's house, He proved that He was no sour ascetic or narrow-souled puritan. His defence of the woman who anointed Him with ten pounds' worth of precious ointment against the mean churls who said the money might have been given to the poor, proves that a Christian may enjoy the comforts and even the luxuries of life within moderate limits. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come." "God giveth us richly all things to enjoy." "For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer." Those Socialists who affirm that Christianity forbids its votaries to make the best of this life, to enjoy it to the full, entirely misrepresent it; consequently their contention that the satisfactions of this life can only be realised in proportion as Christianity is rejected is seen to be baseless.

During Christ's earthly ministry social inequalities and injustices existed, and in much more flagrant and oppressive forms than they do to-day: but he never denounced them, nor did He make any direct effort to remove them. He was not a political economist, or a social reformer, much less a politician; He was a Counsellor, a Revealer, a Redeemer. He had a better way than that of the reformers and economists. They deal with the external conditions of man's life: He deals with the life itself. Their methods are political; His method is moral. They teach men; He saves them. They rely upon Law; He relies upon Love. They propound ambitious schemes for re-constructing society on a new basis, for dealing with men in multitudes, and for accomplishing gigantic reforms on the instant; He is content to deal with men one by one, to work by slow and toilsome processes, and on the old-fashioned basis of placing every man in a right relation to God. That His method is the only one that accords with God's will and with man's nature, and therefore the only effective one, will appear more fully in a subsequent chapter.

Upon the relation and the duty of the Christian towards his fellow-men, no wiser words, or truer, have ever been uttered than those of good old Bishop Latimer, who, in his sermon on "Our Daily Bread," says:—

"When I say, 'Give us this day our daily bread,' I pray not for myself only, if I ask as He biddeth me, but I pray for all others. Wherefore say I not, 'Our Father, give me this day my daily bread'? For because God is not my God alone, He is a common God. And here we be admonished to be friendly, loving, and charitable one to another: for what God giveth, I cannot say, 'this is mine,' but I must say 'this is ours.' For the rich man cannot say 'this is mine alone, God hath given it to me for my own use.' Nor yet hath the poor man any title unto it to take it away from him. No, the poor man may not do so, for when he doeth so, he is a thief afore God and man. But yet the poor man hath title to the rich man's goods, so that the rich man ought to let the poor man have part of his riches to help and comfort him withal. Therefore when God sendeth unto me much, it is not my own, but ours; it is not given unto me alone, but I must help my poor neighbours withal." Again he says: "Remember this word 'our' what it meaneth. I told you. And here I have occasion to speak of the proprieties of things, for I fear if I should leave it so, some of you would report me wrongfully, and affirm that all things should be common. I say not so. Certain it is that God hath ordained proprieties of things, so that which is mine is not thine: for what thou hast I cannot take from thee. If all things were common there could be no theft, and so this commandment, 'Thou shalt not steal,' were in vain. But it is not so: the laws of the realm make *meum et tuum*, mine and thine. If I have things by those laws, then I have them well. But this you must not forget, that St. Paul saith: 'Relieve the necessity of those who have need.' Things are not so common that any man may take my goods from me, for this is theft; but they are so common that we ought to distribute them unto the poor, to help them, and to comfort them with it." With regard to the Jerusalem experiment, Latimer has these remarks: "There was a certain manner of having things in common in the time of the apostles; for some good men, as

Barnabas was; sold their lands and possessions, and brought the money unto the apostles. But that was done for this cause—there was a great many of Christian people at that time treated very ill, insomuch as they lived before God; now such folk came unto the apostles for aid and help; therefore those which were faithful men, seeing the poverty of their brethren, went and sold that they had, and spent the money amongst such poor which were newly made Christians.”

In the Pope's recent Encyclical upon the labour question these remarks occur: “The chiefest and most excellent rule for the right use of money is one which the heathen philosophers indicated, but which the Church has traced out clearly, and has not only made known to men's minds, but has impressed upon their lives. It rests on the principle that it is one thing to have a right to the possession of money, and another thing to have a right to use money as one pleases. Private ownership, as we have seen, is the natural right of man, and to exercise that right, especially as members of society, is not only lawful, but absolutely necessary. It is lawful, says St. Thomas of Aquin, for a man to hold private property, and it is also necessary for the carrying on of human life. But if the question be asked, how must one's possessions be used, the Church replies without hesitation in the words of the same holy doctor: ‘Man should not consider his outward possessions as his own, but as common to all, so as to share them without difficulty when others are in need.’ Whence the apostle saith, command the rich of this world . . . to give with lax, to communicate. True, no one is commanded to distribute to others that which is required for his own necessities and those of his household; nor even to give away what is reasonably required to keep up becomingly his condition in life; for no one ought to live unbecomingly. For when necessity has been supplied, and one's position fairly considered, it is a duty to give to the indigent, out of that which is over. It is a duty, not of justice (except in extreme cases), but of Christian charity—a duty which is not enforced by human law. . . . Thus to sum up what has been said:—Whoever has received from the divine bounty a large share of blessings, whether they be

eternal or corporeal or gifts of the mind, has received them for the purpose of using them for the perfecting of his own nature, and, at the same time, that he may employ them as the minister of God's providence for the benefit of others."

Thus Latimer, the Protestant bishop who was burned to death by the Papal bigots of his day, and Pope Leo XIII., who now occupies the Pontiff's chair, agree as regards the duty of Christians towards these social and economical questions which so intimately and practically affect the welfare of society.*

* The editor of one of our leading London daily newspapers (much read by Nonconformists) recently stated that it was "this damned religion" which was preventing the triumph of Socialism. He is right. Christianity and Radical-Socialism are irreconcilably opposed, and whilst the former is a living force the latter can never triumph.

CHAPTER III.

COMBINATIONS OF LABOURERS AND OF CAPITALISTS; WITH OBSERVATIONS ON TRADE UNIONISM, CONCILIATION, AND ARBITRATION, PROFIT SHARING, AND CO-OPERATION.

THE purpose of this chapter is to inquire to what extent the relations between Capital and Labour can be placed upon a permanently satisfactory footing by the action, interaction, and counteraction of capitalistic and labour combinations.

Perhaps there is no subject upon which it is so necessary that Englishmen should clear their minds of cant as the subject of Trade Unions; as there is certainly none other upon which they indulge in such wild and persistent exaggeration. The average Englishman, sober and rational enough on most things, seems to quite lose his head when he comes to deal with this question, with the result that he indulges in an amount of sentimental, almost hysterical, balderdash which he would be the first to laugh at in other men in regard to other matters. As for the average British politician, he is evidently convinced that Trade Unions were founded under direct guidance from Heaven, and that they are sacrosanct institutions which must be touched very delicately, almost reverently. Outspoken criticism upon them would amount to something like profanity, and must not for a moment be tolerated, at all events among politicians. If Trade Unions were Divinely organised institutions, endued with supernatural powers for the regeneration of humanity, they could not be spoken of in terms substantially different from those which are now used. The object of this work, however, is to ascertain the truth, and teach it, without fear or favour, without regard to the prejudices or susceptibilities of either individuals or classes; and the writer will, therefore, endeavour to probe this subject to the heart with the keen lancet of Truth, and to sound and test the pretentious edifice of Trade Unionism with the plummet of Justice.

Trade Unions exist ; Trade Unionism is a fact (though it is not so potent a factor in industrial affairs as it pretends to be) ; and no doubt they have to be reckoned with. What is more, probably nobody wishes to sweep them out of existence, provided that they will restrict their operations within proper limits and content themselves with the use of legitimate methods. This proviso would, however, be fatal to Trade Unions in their present form.

The right of workmen to form unions of their own is legally established. These unions can even promote strikes in order to secure an advance in wages or an improvement in the conditions under which their members work without in any way violating the common law of this country. Formerly any such attempt at combination was illegal, and any attempt to raise wages by concerted action was a criminal offence. We hear much nowadays to the effect that working men are fighting for the right to combine. Nobody knows better than working men themselves that they are not fighting for any such purpose. They have the right to combine in the fullest possible manner. Not since 1825 has a combination of workmen been unlawful. In 1875 workmen were placed on absolute equality with their masters as regards freedom of contract and breach of contract. The same measure enacted that no combination of persons is to be deemed criminal if the acts done, or proposed to be done, by such combination would not be criminal when done by one person. But Trade Union leaders are asking that legislation should go even beyond this. Not content with the right to combine, the right to strike for higher wages, they are fighting for the power to intimidate and coerce workmen who will not agree with them or join their unions. As the law now stands unionists who intimidate non-unionists, or strikers who are guilty of assault or of damaging their employer's property, may be rigorously punished ; but if the new unionists could get their way all these things would speedily be made legal. They wish to have the law of conspiracy abolished in order that they may at once gag and fetter labour and terrorise and coerce capital. The dock strike and the various strikes which have since occurred have conclusively shown that Trade Unionism, not satisfied with

equality, is contending for supremacy. The free workman is master of the situation, and must always be so in a perfectly free state of society. When strikers, either for good reasons or without reason, throw up their work, there will always be plenty of men ready to take their places while existing conditions prevail in this country. Employers, deprived of the services of men to whom they have paid fair wages, or who may wish to impose upon them unreasonable conditions, will be able to obtain other workmen out of the open market, and their right to do this is perhaps their only remaining defence against Trade Unionism. The real question is whether the free labourer is to continue to have the legal right to sell his labour in the best market he can find, and whether the employer is to continue to have the legal right to obtain labour on the best terms he can in the open market. The new unionism would speedily settle the question by depriving both the employer and the free workman of the liberty which they now enjoy. They are clamouring for legislation which will effect this two-fold object, and members of Parliament and other public men are to be found who are willing to assist these English Nihilists in destroying the fundamental rights and liberties of their fellow-countrymen. Trade Unions and their sympathisers have got to be taught, by the sternest and sharpest methods if necessary, that the rights of every man are as sacred as their own, and that these rights are not to be trampled under foot even by the class who may, numerically considered, be most powerful at the polls.

The legality of Trade Unions is therefore beyond discussion. Their morality is another thing. One of their direct effects is to enfeeble the individual man, to beget in him a sense of helplessness when he stands by himself, and to make him feel that he is only strong when he falls into rank with hundreds and thousands of others. Yet every man has got to fight his own battle in this world; and in regard to those things which are most momentous in their nature and effects, he must of necessity stand alone. A man who has his strength within himself may, by God's good help, win against all the world; whilst the man who is for ever depending upon his fellows and not upon himself may lose at every point. Another effect of Trade Unions is that they

degrade the superior workman to the level of the inferior workman. A union cannot discriminate; it lumps men together in the mass. Men are not things, and they cannot be treated in this wholesale fashion, as though they were so many baulks of timber, without serious injury being done all round. When a Trade Union insists upon thousands and tens of thousands of men being paid the same wages because they are engaged on the same work, without regard to the variations in quality which distinguish men and their work, and without regard to the amount of labour which each may perform, a flagrant injustice is done to two classes of persons, namely, to the employer and to the more competent among the workmen. For the employer has to pay the same for labour which is inferior in quality and bulk as he has to pay for that which is superior; while the capable workman who works more and works better than the incapable one is paid only at the same rate as the latter. Furthermore, there is a tendency in all Trade Unions to magnify their own importance, and to carry their authority, such as it is, beyond the sphere within which it ought to be confined, and to dictate to employers the conditions upon which they are to use their capital and do their business, and to coerce workmen into compliance with the Union regulations, however absurd or arbitrary they may be. Trade Unions, and particularly their officials, are persuaded that it is their business, their chief and almost their sole business, in fact, to control great industries and to dictate to employers the terms on which they ought, and on which they must be made, to conduct their affairs. Most of the great strikes of the last few years, the Dock strike, the various coal strikes, railway strikes, &c., have all been impudent unabashed attempts to coerce employers into doing, not what it was their duty to do, but what a few Trade Union Bosses thought that it was their duty to do. And as many of these Union officials were not only utterly ignorant of economic laws, but also without special knowledge of the industries which they attacked, they blundered seriously, and thereby wrought much injury, both to these industries and to the interests of the men whom they misled. It is well known that the shipbuilding trade was driven away from the Thames chiefly through the action of Trade Unions. Now the

Unions seem to be doing their best to drive it from the Tyne as well, for they have got up one strike after another on the most absurd pretexts, and inflicted almost irreparable loss upon employers. The same thing has been going on all over the country in connection with docks, railways, mines, factories, and the aggregate losses which have been the result are simply incalculable. Not only have millions of pounds which ought to have gone into the pockets of employers and workmen been diverted elsewhere, but a large amount of trade which ought to have been kept in this country has been driven away, and a great deal of it will never come back. And all because a few Trade Union officials, not content to manage their own organisations, wish to manage and control the business of the employers as well. The worst of it is that this illegitimate interference is an essential feature of Trade Unionism as it now exists, and is inseparable from it. There is no hope of things being better while Trade Unions exist in their present form.

The tyranny of Trade Unions is perhaps their most objectionable characteristic. Richard Cobden, who knew what he was talking about, said in one of his speeches in 1842: "Depend upon it nothing can be got by fraternising with Trade Unions. They are formed upon principles of brutal tyranny and monopoly. I would rather live under a Dey of Algiers than a Trade Union." These sentiments were generally held by the Liberals of that day; and who can prove that they were in the wrong? If they opposed the Factory Acts, it was not because they delighted in oppression, but because they foresaw that those Acts, not in themselves, but by being made the pretext for further interference with freedom, would originate evils which would more than outweigh any good that they might effect. Events have more than justified their prescience. For every new aggression upon our liberties, every new attack upon the rights and upon the property of employers, is sought to be justified by an appeal to the Factory Acts. In this way the harm done by those Acts indirectly more than counterbalances the good which they may have directly effected. If modern Liberals were as true to their name and creed as John Bright and Richard Cobden were they

would take the same view of Trade Unions as those eminent men did. No true friend of liberty can be a supporter of Trade Unionism.

Whilst Trade Unions are doing a vast amount of mischief incidentally, they do not really succeed in the primary object for which they were instituted, namely, to raise and to keep wages above the point which they would have reached had there been no Trade Unions at all. Trade Union leaders like to flatter themselves that they have really been instrumental in adding to the wages of the workman. For the most part they have really done nothing of the kind, and in so far as they have succeeded in this direction it has been in an almost infinitesimal degree. The contention that Trade Unions have really raised the rate of wages is made to look plausible because wages have increased considerably since Trade Unions were established. That a larger increase of wages has occurred during the period covered by Trade Unionism than had ever occurred during any like period previously is undoubtedly true; but that this increase, though coincident with the rise and growth of Trades Unionism, is actually due to them, is a proposition which needs to be proved. So far there has been no satisfactory proof of it. In order to show that the increase that has taken place in wages is really due to Trades Unionism, it will be necessary also to show that no other causes have been at work producing the same effect. This cannot be shown. It is easy, however, to bring the matter to a simple test, which even the most unlearned working man may understand. Can the strongest Trade Union in existence, however perfect its combination and its machinery, succeed in enforcing an increase of wages during a time of trade depression, when markets are glutted and values are falling? Is there a case on record where a Trade Union has succeeded in doing this? The answer to both questions must be in the negative. Everybody can see that wages can only rise when times are prosperous, and only fall when commerce is depressed, and that they do so in accordance with, and in obedience to, natural laws which no human organisation can check or control. Domestic servants have no Trade Union, and yet their wages have increased during the last fifty years in a larger proportion than those of any other

class. Obviously in this case the increase is not due to Trade Unionism. To what then is it due? To the operation of the law of supply and demand, and to nothing else whatever. Domestic servants, taking all things into account, are better paid than any other class of manual workers. They serve no apprenticeship, and they begin to earn good wages at once, although they are often incompetent and untrustworthy.

There are also other occupations in which wages have risen, although the men have no Trade Unions. It is claimed by Trade Unionists that even in these cases the increase is indirectly due to their organisations; but it would be just as reasonable to say that it is due to the action of the Zoological Society. The fact is that the development of railway and steamship enterprises, the enormous growth of our industries as the result of Free Trade, the consequent increase of wealth, the advance in the general standard of living and the multiplicity of new wants which that wealth has created, all of which have given rise to an augmented demand for labour, are the real causes which have led to an increase of wages all round. Capital has been plentiful, and capitalists have felt sure of a return for their expenditure, and wherever this is the case labour will be in demand and wages good. But Trade Unionists coolly ignore all the causes of increased wealth and wages which we have mentioned, and calmly appropriate to the credit of their pet institution the results of all the progress which has been achieved, by whatever means, during the last two generations. It is not surprising that they should adopt these tactics; but it is a marvel that other people do not see through the deception.

No economist or Trade Unionist has yet proved that open Trade Unions are effectual in raising wages. All Trade Unionists, and some economists, have asserted that they are; but they cannot support their assertion by any trustworthy evidence.

Professor Fawcett says that an advance in wages does not follow immediately upon an improvement in trade without the intervention of a Trade Union, or, in other words, that the workmen combined in a Union get their share of increased profits sooner than they would uncombined. This

is not proved, but assuming it to be true it is no argument for Trade Unions. For the natural thing is that wages should not rise or fall simultaneously with improvement or depression in trade. Employers must have time to realise increased profits from improved trade before they can extend their businesses or go into new enterprises, or in other words until they require more men. When that point is reached, and the supply of labourers is inadequate to the demand, wages rise naturally, whether there are any Trade Unions or not, and nothing can prevent them doing so. It is quite possible, however, that where a Trade Union does exist, and prematurely demands an advance in wages on the first sign of improved trade, and before employers have had time to realise increased profits and plan new projects, the enterprise of employers may be checked and the ultimate demand for labour limited. In that way a Trade Union may not only prevent an increase of wages from being actually realised, but it may also be the means of knocking on the head schemes for the enlargement of old businesses and for the foundation of new ones, to the loss of the country in general and of workmen in particular. On the other hand, when a period of depression sets in employers often go on for some time making but little profit, or perhaps suffering actual loss, before they limit their operations, that is to say before they decide that labourers are too numerous for the work in hand and that therefore wages must fall. So that if men uncombined seem to suffer some disadvantage when trade takes a turn for the better they are amply compensated for it when trade takes a turn for the worse. This is the natural course of things, and Unions can do nothing but mischief by interfering with it.

Professor Nicholson, in his article on wages in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, admits that Trade Unions can do but little to raise nominal or money wages, but he appears to think that the Unions, by performing their proper function, which is to promote the general interests and improve the general condition of their members, may raise the real rate of wages. Even Professor Marshall acknowledges that while combination can do something to raise wages it cannot do much. This is faint praise, indeed. For ourselves, while we deny entirely the power of Trade Unions

in or of themselves to raise wages, we are prepared to prove that they do an amount of positive harm which constitutes them a veritable danger to society.

It may be necessary to state that although we thus take up a position of antagonism towards Trade Unions we are actuated by no motive of hostility towards the working classes, and that if we honestly believed these organisations to exist and act in the true interests of those classes, we would heartily support them. When the working classes are spoken of, however, let it be borne in mind that the overwhelming majority of those classes are not members of these Unions, and that a not inconsiderable proportion of that majority of them are even actively and bitterly opposed to them. Mr. R. Giffen, in his evidence before the Labour Commission, said: "The fullest report of Trade Unions showed a membership of 871,000 only as compared with about 13,000,000 workpeople and 7,000,000 adult male labourers. The annual income of Trade Unions was nearly 1,000,000*l.* or about 27*s.* 6*d.* per head of the members, and the income of the union members who belonged mostly to the higher grades would probably be not less than 70*l.* per head. So that the union saving, or rather insurance, for it was not all saved, was about 2 per cent. of income." Numerically considered, therefore, the Trade Unionists are an insignificant minority of the working classes, and taken as a whole they are certainly not superior to free workmen, either intellectually, socially, or in any other respect. It is not obvious why in these circumstances so much deference or consideration should be paid to Trade Unionists by politicians and others, especially as their own favourite principle, the darling doctrine of democracy, is that the majority should rule. Let this principle be rigorously applied in matters industrial, and the Trade Unions would be swept out of existence. What right, legal or moral, have the Trade Unionists to claim to represent the whole of the working classes; to demand and shape legislation in the supposed interests of those classes; and to shake their fist in the face of the Government and threaten all sorts of terrible penalties if the behests of their leaders are not obeyed? Really it is about time that our statesmen and legislators, and the community in general, took a more

sober and truthful estimate of the proportions and the power of Trade Unionism, and ceased to appraise it according to the pretentious and fanciful valuation of its professional advocates. The power of Trade Unionism is nothing very formidable; certainly it is nothing to be afraid of, despite its bluff and bounce and bluster; and even time-serving politicians would do well to remember that for one voter inside a Trade Union there are at least seven voters outside.

For Trade Unions as benefit societies, or educational institutions, there is something to be said; or rather there was, for Friendly and Assurance Societies, Polytechnics and technical classes, are doing provident and educational work much better than Trade Unions can hope to do it. Besides, these matters now enter so little into the life of a Trade Union, and they are so lightly esteemed in comparison with what are thought to be the weightier questions of wages, hours of labour, &c., that there is really no need to take them into our consideration. Still, if Trade Unions would confine their operations to providing for their members in sickness and at death, to educating them in their respective trades, and to securing for them sanitary and healthy conditions of labour, they would do almost unmixed good and secure the commendation of everybody. But a Union which devoted its energies to useful but humdrum work of this kind would now a days be voted a fossil and ridiculed out of existence. Professor Nicholson's plea on behalf of Trade Unions, that, although they can scarcely do anything to raise wages, they are able to improve the condition of their members in various other ways, is feeble in the extreme. As a matter of fact the Unions practically confine their efforts to the one object of securing higher wages (reduced hours are intended to mean a virtual rise of wages, since the Unions intend, if they can, to ensure the same pay for less work), and in the pursuit of this purpose they sacrifice without compunction the liberties of their members, the property of employers, and the welfare of the country at large.

There are four features of modern Trade Unionism which must ever be borne in mind: (1) That it is, and is becoming more and more Socialistic in its tendencies and aims;

(2) That it aspires to be national and international; (3) That it breeds a class of professional agitators whose very business it is to foment the ill humours of agitation and discontent among workmen, and to engender ill-will towards, and conflict with, employers; and (4) That it regards boycotting and intimidation as legitimate weapons, and uses the latter against workmen and the former against employers, as unblushingly as the Irish Land Leaguers used them against landlords and honest tenants.

The Trade Union Congress of 1894 was held at Norwich, and its proceedings were of the usual character, and do not therefore call for any lengthened notice. In general it may be stated that they proved that the drift of Trade Unionism towards Socialism had been accelerated during the year, and that the resolutions passed were more pronouncedly Socialistic than ever. One resolution, moved by Mr. J. Mawdsley, of Manchester, was to this effect: "Recognising that the ultimate well-being of the workers depends on their being able to retain *all they produce*, this Congress recommends all workers to do their utmost to make both the trade union and the co-operative movement more successful, believing that they are both conducing to the same end." This was unanimously carried, with this addition—"and this Congress strongly condemns any co-operative society that trades with non-Union blackleg firms, and further, that every co-operative society should employ none but Trade Unionists."

Another resolution, which was carried by 256 votes against 5, was in favour of a general Eight Hours Day, and was in these terms: "That the Parliamentary Committee be urged to introduce a Bill into the House of Commons fixing the hours of work in bakehouses, and in all other trades and occupations, at eight per day or forty-eight per week." This was carried amid "vehement cheering."

Mr. Terence A. Flynn (significant name) moved, and Mr. J. H. Wilson, M.P., seconded, a resolution declaring "that it should be a penal offence for any employer to bring or cause to be brought to any locality extra labour where the already existing supply is sufficient for the needs of the district." This ridiculous proposal was, incredible as it

may seem, accepted and passed by a Congress which claims to be the perfect embodiment of economic wisdom and to represent the flower of our working men. The object of this proposal is of course to enable men to strike on any pretext or for any terms with the certainty that they will win, since all business will be at a standstill, and any attempt on the part of the employers to introduce outsiders to do the work would be put down by the strong hand of the law. This crazy demand may perhaps open the eyes of certain amiable but dull-witted people to what Trade Unionism really is and what it is aiming at.

Finally, the Congress recorded its opinion that "it is essential to the maintenance of British industries to nationalise the land, and the whole of the means of production, distribution, and exchange"—the entire Socialistic programme swallowed at one gulp.

In supporting the resolution, Mr. John Burns said that "thrift was invented by capitalist rogues to deprive honest fools of their diet and proper standard of comfort, so that their balance at the Bank would be in proportion to the capacity of the workers to allow themselves to be deprived of their share of national wealth." Mr. F. J. Delves, the President of the Congress, gave utterance to some remarkable sentiments, one of which was that: "The scandalous growth of our revenue is due to the Army and Navy, not to the Education Vote or the factory inspectors, or any of the things we have ever desired or profit by. The annual charge for keeping this sword of Damocles hanging over the head of our movement is 70,000,000*l.*" Of course the poor man meant expenditure when he said revenue, and he could not be expected to know that the Army and Navy cost together less than half the sum he names, or to realise that they are essential to the preservation of our national industries and even of our national existence. But what sort of a mind must a man have who describes the Army and Navy as "a sword of Damocles," which hangs in some mysterious manner over the head of Trade Unionism? Mr. Delves also said: "The only direction in which we can look for the ultimate solution of our industrial problems is that of Collectivism."

If faith in the wisdom, the justice, the moderation of

Trade Unionism can survive the shock which it has received from the Norwich Congress, it will survive anything. Nothing more irrational, more preposterous, or more outrageous can ever be said or done than was said and done on that occasion. Those who can continue to believe in the worthiness and usefulness of Trade Unionism after the proofs which it has given of its real character and aims are past argument. Reason would be lost upon them; they must be placed in the category of fanatics and enthusiasts. We are convinced, however, that the majority of the intelligent people of this country will henceforth estimate Trade Unionism at its true worth, and will refuse to recognise that it possesses any authority whatever. From this time forth the Trade Union Congress will be regarded as a discredited body, whose members are entitled to no respect, whose decisions carry no weight. It will be looked upon in the same light, and treated in the same manner, as the Social Democratic Federation; that is, as a body of frenzied and violent men who are at war with society, and upon whom society must make war in self-defence. The deliberations and resolutions of this Congress ought in future to be treated with contempt. By treating them with respect and gravity Parliament can only degrade its dignity and sink itself to the level of this egregious Socialistic body.

It may be well to repeat that the writer disclaims all motives of hostility towards Trade Unionism in its legitimate aspect, and that the strictures which he has felt it to be his duty to pass upon it relate almost exclusively to that newer development of it which is pronouncedly and avowedly Socialistic. If, and so far as, it can be made a power for good by judicious reform and regulation, we may sympathise with it and wish it all prosperity. But if it cannot be reformed it will have to be suppressed. The one thing certain is that no civilised and progressive nation will, or can, continue to cherish, or even tolerate, such an anti-social and destructive force as Trade Unionism is now proving itself to be.

We now turn to combinations of employers. Capital has shown that it can organise its forces as well as Labour, as working men have found to their cost. Capitalistic combinations are rendered necessary, and indeed almost

inevitable, by the industrial conditions which now exist. Time was when an employer could stand alone, as he had to deal merely with his own workmen in a free and open market, under which circumstances he could always hold his own. Now this is altered. It is not only his own workmen with whom he has to deal, but also the whole of the other workmen in the country—who are engaged in that branch of trade, and who are organised into powerful Unions, who do not hesitate to use the boycott against him and to strive by every means to ruin his business. Hence he must either combine with his brother employers or go to the wall. Competition is to be restricted and modified by combination, resorted to by both sides; the effect of which combination is to limit the freedom of all concerned and to make for protection and monopoly. This is the situation into which we have been brought by aggressive Trade Unionism; it is in no wise an improvement upon the old state of affairs, when everybody was free to do the best he could for himself; but it is a reality and we must accept it for better or for worse. This is the era of aggregation; the spirit of collectivism is in the air; combination is the fetish of the day. Masses of men are thoroughly under the delusion that they can, by the mere fact of organising themselves into a Union, reverse the laws of nature, change the very constitution of things, successfully defy Omnipotence, and outwit Omniscience. Under the influence of this hallucination they are rushing to join hands in combinations of all kinds, fully resolved to show what mighty deeds they can perform. And a very ludicrous spectacle they make of themselves! Mrs. Partington, and her heroic endeavours to keep back the Atlantic with a mop, did not cut a more ridiculous figure.

Employers equally with workmen have the right to combine for their own ends. Hitherto they have been reluctant to use that right in this country. Now, however, they are showing signs of awakening, and they are beginning to combine in all directions with the object of making a stand against the extreme demands of labour. The Shipping Federation, which has already made its power felt in a remarkable manner, is only the beginning. Employers of every class will use their right of combination to the

utmost. Workmen's combinations will everywhere be confronted by masters' combinations. Industrial life will become, if not a chronic state of war, at least nothing better than an armed truce. The temper of the combatants is such that neither side will be satisfied until there has been more than one pitched battle, and one side or the other has been thoroughly beaten. The issues at stake are so vital that the matter must be fought to the bitter end, and, as the late Lord Derby said, the only business of the Government is to "keep a ring."

Many persons who contend that the working men should have a right to combine are unwilling to admit that the employers should have the same right. Whenever the employers, put on their defence, show signs of using their power in earnest there is generally a great outcry raised by shallow-minded and hysterical people who denounce the employers as being guilty of brutality. Yet the masters are only doing precisely the same as the workmen. Why should labour combinations attack capital, and capitalistic combinations not resist the aggressions of labour? As was remarked at the outset, there is no subject upon which people more need to clear their mind of cant at the present day than the one we are discussing.

Now that employers are highly and strongly organised, and capital is commencing to show its prowess, the workmen and their leaders are beginning to sing a different song. They no longer boast valiantly as aforetime that they intend to fight it out; on the contrary when the battle really does start in earnest they at once begin to piteously entreat somebody to interfere and save them from themselves. Nothing is more extraordinary among the changes which have come over militant Trade Unionists during the last few years than their suddenly conceived aversion to strikes. Formerly they sang the praises of the strike in full *fortissimo*; now if they sing them at all it is in the faintest *pianissimo*; most of them have altogether dropped the *jubilato*, and if they sing of strikes at all it is in a most plaintive and melancholy minor. John Burns, who has probably done more during the last six years to promote strikes in this country than any other man, and who during the Dock Strike exhausted his vocabulary of eulogy in extolling the

strike as the workman's weapon, has signalised himself more than once recently by stating that the day of strikes is over. Why and whence this extraordinary change of attitude? The reason is to be found in the fact that the employers have found their feet—and their heads too – and have armed themselves *cap-à-pie*, and always stand on the defensive. Thus it is proved once more that for both sides to be thoroughly prepared for war is a sure means of preserving peace. Mr. Burns is like a big boy who has bullied every other boy in the school, until at last another boy has come to the front who can beat him, whereupon the former bully says: "Don't let us fight any more, but shake hands and be good friends." The discretion which the Trade Union leaders are beginning to show is of that kind which has been described as the better part of valour. They were all for fighting when they were pretty sure they would have things their own way; but now that a solid army has risen up to oppose them, they have suddenly been converted to the opinion that fighting is a very disastrous proceeding for both parties.

The Trade Unions and their leaders are abandoning war for diplomacy. It is a very astute move, and if the employers are not very acute they will find themselves outwitted. The object of the Socialistic Trade Unionists is the same now as it always was, but they intend to use different means in the pursuit of it. What the employers have got to keep constantly in mind is that the aim of their opponents is unchanged, and while this is the case, any mere change of method is only calculated to excite suspicion. Virtually the Trade Unionists say: "We intend to wring out of the employers as large a share of the profits as possible, not resting content until we have so far stripped them that they will have nothing left but the bare means of subsistence. John Stuart Mill tells us that we can do this, and we intend to try to do it. We have found out that we cannot accomplish this purpose by fair battle in the open field, as the employers have organised their forces against us and are now more than a match for us; but we can obtain by strategy what we cannot obtain by war, and therefore we have abandoned fighting and mean to rely upon the arts of diplomacy. What the strike cannot win

for us may be secured to us through Boards of Arbitration, or through schemes of profit-sharing ; consequently we intend to press for these. Political Economy is now so discredited, and public sympathy has so far taken its place, that we can always rely upon public opinion being brought to bear in our favour. Besides, we wield voting power enough to turn any General Election, or to put any party in power that we choose, and for this reason the politicians may always be counted upon as a great force on our side. We have only to make out a plausible case, and before the employers have time to discount it by putting their side of the question the public conscience will have been stirred, and a great wave of emotion will be created in our favour, on the crest of which we shall ride to victory." These are the sentiments which are now in the minds of the leaders of Trade Unionism ; these are the motives which actuate them ; these are the calculations upon which they rely. Of course they have never said so in so many words, and are not likely to say so, but these are legitimate deductions from what they do say and from the manner in which they act.

Under these circumstances it becomes our duty to scrutinize closely the schemes which are now in such high favour among the "friends of Labour," and which are put forward as substitutes for the strike and as means of remedying the dislocations between Capital and Labour. These are Conciliation and Arbitration, profit-sharing, and co-operation.

Against Conciliation and Arbitration nothing can on principle be said. Reasonable men must always prefer conciliation to conflict, and it is much more sensible to settle disputes by arbitration rather than by the sword. It is possible, however, for a thing to be very good in the abstract, but not so good in its concrete form, and this appears to be the case with Conciliation and Arbitration. At all events the experience which we have had of this method of settling labour disputes up to the present is not calculated to commend it to the favour of fair minded men.

With regard to the general question of Conciliation and Arbitration, all that need here be said is that it is eminently

desirable that this method of settling disputes should be as largely resorted to as possible, always provided that it be resorted to voluntarily by both the combatants. The demand that arbitration should be made compulsory upon both parties cannot be too strongly deprecated, as being contrary to all the traditions and principles of the English nation and destructive of the liberty which Englishmen prize almost as dearly as life itself. This demand is, however, continually being put forth, and it appears to grow in persistency and strength year by year. Compulsory conciliation would of course be a contradiction in terms, as no such thing is conceivable. The very idea of conciliation is that of drawing people together; but people would be driven and not drawn together if they were compelled by an Act of Parliament to meet with a view to conciliating each other. Conciliation must, in the nature of the case, be voluntary; and arbitration must be voluntary also if it is not to be shorn of its grace and its effect.

Voluntary conciliation and arbitration can of course be resorted to by people of their own free will, without any coercion by Acts of Parliament. Some of our legislators, however, are actually introducing Bills into Parliament every year in order to promote voluntary Conciliation and Arbitration. If ever there was a work of supererogation, surely this is one; and it is a pity that the said legislators cannot find a more profitable way of spending their own time and that of the nation. If people have the disposition to conciliate each other or to submit their differences to arbitration, they will do this of their own motion, without any assistance from the Legislature. If this disposition is lacking in them all the Acts of Parliament in the world would be of no avail. It is a marvel that our politicians cannot or will not learn from past experience in this matter. There are Acts upon the statute book already which relate to this very subject of arbitration, and although they have not been repealed they are virtually dead, simply because nobody cares one whit about them, or ever thinks of resorting to them. Two Acts were passed, one in 1825, and the other in 1837, to the effect that when a formal application is made to a magistrate of the district where a dispute

arises, he may nominate not less than four or more than six arbitrators, one half being employers and one half workmen. The Court thus formed can deal with disputes arising out of existing contracts, though not with disputes as to future wages, except by mutual consent of the parties concerned, and the award of the Court can be enforced by distress and imprisonment. This surely ought to satisfy even Mr. Mundella and Mr. D. H. Schloss, and the other advocates of compulsory arbitration. These Acts are as dead as Queen Anne, as nobody appears to have ever thought of using them. In addition to these measures, further acts were passed in 1867 and in 1872, of one of which Mr. Mundella was the author, and this Act empowers employers and workmen in any trade to form a standing Council of Arbitration under a licence to be obtained from the Home Secretary, and large powers of enforcing awards, similar to those contained in the Acts of 1825 and 1837, were to be conferred upon those standing Councils of Arbitration. But nobody has ever heard of such a Council being formed, or of a license to form one ever having been applied for through the Home Office.

Whilst legislation on this subject has been an utter failure, efforts to form voluntary Boards of Conciliation have met with a considerable degree of success. Many such Boards are now in existence, and they are doing useful work. But the politicians wish to mar the work of these Boards by investing them, upon their being registered at a Government Department, with the legal powers contained in the Acts before alluded to of enforcing their awards. Why cannot these busybodies let well alone, and allow the good work that has been commenced by these voluntary Boards to proceed without let or hindrance? The advocates of legislation have but one idea, and that is the idea of compulsion, and to introduce any element of compulsion in connection with Conciliation is, we repeat, a manifest absurdity, and it will certainly prove fatal to the very objects which the advocates of such legislation profess to be anxious to promote. All the good that has ever been done in this direction so far has been accomplished by voluntary methods, and this is a presumption in favour of those methods. On the other hand every attempt to deal with this matter by legislation has been

an absolute failure, and this is a strong presumption that similar attempts in the future will fail also. New South Wales, like the mother country, has had its Labour Commission, and one of the recommendations made by this Commission was that Courts of Conciliation and Arbitration should be established. On March 31, 1892, an Act was passed for the purpose of establishing such Courts, but it contained no provision of a compulsory nature. Shortly afterwards the great strike at the Broken Hill Mines commenced, and lasted for three months; but the Act in question was not resorted to by either party. It was so absolutely nugatory that it might as well have not been passed at all. It is quite possible, however, that the advocates of compulsion may carry their point, and that English employers and workmen may before long have a taste of a very unpleasant form of coercion. If this should turn out to be the case, we venture to predict that any Compulsory Act of this kind will either prove a dead letter or will speedily be repealed. We shall no longer be worthy of the name of Englishmen when we allow Parliament to deprive us of the liberty of quarrelling with each other, or of settling our quarrels in our own way.

The sum of the whole matter is this; that as disputes will arise between employers and workmen, human nature being what it is, it is eminently desirable that when such disputes do arise, every legitimate effort should be made to conciliate the parties, that is to draw them together with the view of inducing them to settle their differences amicably; that voluntary Boards of Conciliation, which aim at doing this, are deserving of every encouragement; but that Parliament and the State would do well to keep their hands off this question, as their intervention will inevitably do more harm than good. What masters and workmen most need is to be left alone. If they are left to themselves they will be sure to find methods of settling their differences much more effectual than any that can be imposed upon them by an external authority.

Profit sharing demands our consideration, not on account of its intrinsic merit or importance, but rather on account of the extrinsic and artificial consequence with which it has of late been invested by its advocates, including the Labour

Commission. A phrase used by the Commissioners, viz., "industrial partnership," is one of the cant phrases which are now coming into vogue and which really mean nothing. Of course there is a sense in which employers and employed must necessarily be industrial partners, simply because their energies are alike engaged in one form of industry, the one supplying brains and money and the other manual labour. But this natural and obvious meaning of the term is not what is meant by those who speak of "industrial partnership"; in their mouth the phrase indicates the reception of the workman by the employer as a partner who participates in the profits of the concern. We do not hesitate to say that the assumed right of a workman to be in this sense a partner is entirely imaginary, which rests on no basis of fact or reason, and which has been invented by Socialistic Trade Unionism; and, further, that any employer who recognises this alleged right is acting contrary both to his own interests and to those of the working man. The only unassailable and impregnable position which can be taken up on this question is that the workman is entitled to the wages which he earns weekly under his contract, and *to no more*; that this is his full share of the product: and that all that remains after the whole cost of production is met belongs to the employer. This is common sense, and it is equity; it is simple and easy to be understood; it works no ill or injustice to any party; it commends itself to the reason and conscience of mankind universally; and it has the experience of centuries in its favour, for it is the system upon which all successful industry has hitherto been carried on. When once this principle has been tampered with the door is open to endless confusion and discontent.

It is only necessary to reflect for a moment upon the absurdities into which the theory of "industrial partnership" would land us in order to perceive how unsound and pernicious that theory is. The workman is here to-day and gone to-morrow, while the business in which he is employed may have been established for generations. As a rule the workman of to-day has had nothing whatever to do with the establishment of the business, which was founded by the ability and energy and money of the proprietors; all that the workman has done in most cases has been to walk

into the factory or workshop, and take the work which has been provided for him by others. Merely to have work thus provided is in itself an advantage. This work he contracts to do for so much money; when that money is paid to him he has absolutely no further financial interest in the business, except to the extent that he may during good behaviour reasonably look to it for further work on similar terms. To talk of him being a partner in any other sense than the natural and necessary one above adverted to is mischievous nonsense. What have the railway workmen of to-day had to do with constructing and maintaining the railways? Or the seamen of to-day with building and equipping ships? Or the miners of to-day with sinking and maintaining coal mines? Or the cotton and woollen operatives of to-day with erecting factories and filling them with machinery? Or the dockers of to-day with constructing the docks? Or the farm labourers of to-day with fertilizing and stocking the farms? Nothing—absolutely nothing. And the same must be said about all other forms of industry. All that these workmen have done has been to enter into the labours of others, and appropriate the work and the wages provided for them by Ability and Capital. We repeat that this provision of remunerative employment is in itself a boon conferred upon labour by capital, for which labour ought to be thankful, and with which it ought to be content—always provided that labour is adequately and fairly remunerated by capital for its services. But the modern doctrine, forsooth, is that these workmen, who have done nothing to originate the industry, who have never sweated their brains over the concern or put a penny into it, are to be exalted to the position of partners who receive a proportion of the profits in addition to full weekly wages. The notion is preposterous; it is a mere fad of doctrinaires; and practical men who conduct their business prudently and rationally will never accept it. How this whim has ever come to be seriously regarded among a nation of common-sense people is a mystery—or rather it would be a mystery if under democratic institutions all sorts of chimeras were not advocated by politicians whose only concern is to flatter and gain the support of the unthinking populace.

Our contention is that profit sharing:—

1. Has no real or satisfactory basis in either economics or ethics, but is merely a dictate of political expediency.
2. Is a concession to Socialism, which claims that the whole of the product belongs of right to labour. To give the Socialistic Labour party a part of the profits will never satisfy them ; it will merely whet the appetite for more.
3. Is one-sided and partial, as it makes no provision for sharing losses. But there are losses in business as well as gains, and equity demands that those who participate in the one should also share the other. In demanding profit sharing the workman is playing a game of "heads I win, tails you lose ;" for he gains, and the employer loses, in any event.
4. It breaks down in practice, and stands discredited by its failure in the past.

The latter is really the most vital and important point of all ; for Englishmen are a practical race, who will accept a system that works well in practice even if it be unsound in theory, while they will not accept a system which is theoretically sound if it fails under practical tests.

Experience proves that, even as regards the promotion of good feeling between masters and men, and the quickening of the workman's interest in his work, profit sharing is to a great extent a failure ; whilst it is absolutely powerless to detach members of Trade Unions from their Unions, or to induce them to prefer the interests of their employers (and of themselves) to the interests of those organisations. As for the men themselves "weeding out the idle agitator" under the influence of profit sharing, it is an empty dream ; there is nothing in the nature, or the history, or the results of profit sharing to warrant the assumption that it will or can do anything of the kind. On these points we may take as a witness Mr. Schloss, who, although he is an advocate of the system, has supplied evidence of its failure weighty enough to sink it ten thousand fathoms deep in the ocean of blighted hopes. Even as a method of thwarting and counteracting Trade Unionism, for which it has often been

used, profit sharing has not succeeded except in a few cases.

After all that has been said it remains true that the weekly wage system is on the whole the best. It is doubtful whether any man whatever is really better off than a competent workman who is in regular employment at good weekly wages. Such a man has less anxiety than almost any other, whilst he enjoys practically as much of all that is essential to health and happiness as any other man can do. Moreover, it is certain that the workman receives as large a share of the joint product of Capital and Labour under the weekly wage system as he would receive under any other, and probably more, for the hope of making large profits for himself is a great incentive to the employer, and induces him to undertake enterprises which he otherwise would not think of doing—by which enterprises the workmen profit. It is quite possible that if profit sharing became general, and the employer knew that he had to give a large portion of the profits, which are rightfully his own, to his workmen, he might manifest less zeal and energy and ability than he now does. It is practically certain that any general change from the present system in the direction of profit sharing would be a bad thing all round.

The ideal system of remunerating labour, however, is piece work. Of course this system cannot be universally applied; perhaps, indeed, it can only be applied over a very small area of the industrial world. Such workmen as agricultural labourers, indoor servants, grooms, gardeners, gamekeepers, shop assistants, seamen, railway men, and numerous other classes, could not in the nature of things be paid by results. But even where piece-work is practicable, it is not adopted to the extent that it might be, and that it ought to be, largely owing to the antagonism which is manifested towards it by Trade Unions. It was a contention of M. Thiers that the piece-work system, which rewards each worker in exact proportion to the quantity and quality of the work which he produces, was the best of all methods of remuneration, and undoubtedly he was right.

Where piece-work exists in conjunction with machinery which automatically adjusts the rate of wages, as is the case

in South Wales and Monmouthshire, we surely have a system of remuneration which comes as near perfection as possible. In South Wales the Sliding Scale system is in operation, and the principle of the Sliding Scale is that wages rise and fall with the rise and fall of the price of coal. When coal is dear wages are highest; when coal is cheap wages are lowest. Nothing could be fairer than this arrangement, by means of which the workmen actually share in the profits, though in a simple and unobjectionable way. Evidently the miners of South Wales are satisfied that it is a just method of remuneration, for they have worked contentedly under it for many years, and have been preserved from all the evils of strikes. The Sliding Scale committee, which consists of eleven representatives of the masters and eleven of the men, and meets once a month, works the system. The coal-owners also have a very strong Association, with funds amounting to over 100,000*l.*, which acts as a society for mutual assurance and indemnity against loss from strikes. If the miners at a particular colliery threaten to strike, the owner appeals to his Association, and if they support him against his men he is indemnified for any loss which he may suffer through a strike, so that he is no sufferer financially, whilst on the other hand none of his men will be employed by any other member of the Coal-owners' Association. No doubt this firm combination on the part of the employers has had as much to do with preventing strikes as the Sliding Scale itself.

During recent years, owing to depressed trade, the price of coal has fallen, and with it of course the rate of wages. This reduction, instead of being accepted by the South Wales miners as a natural consequence of bad trade, has been received in a spirit of dissatisfaction, which appears to show that the miners as a class are not capable of intelligent reflection upon these matters.

The Miners' Federation is fiercely opposed to the Sliding Scale system, for reasons which are sufficiently obvious, and it has made, and is making, determined efforts to detach the South Wales miners from their allegiance to it, and to draw them into its own arms. In the best interests of the miners concerned, and also of the country at large, it is to be hoped that these efforts will continue to be

unsuccessful; though the power of the Miners' Federation for evil has been strengthened by the Conciliation Board. If, as John Stuart Mill states, the opposition of Trade Unions to piece-work is "discreditable" and indicative of "a low moral condition," we may affirm still more emphatically that the antagonism of the Miners' Federation to the Sliding Scale is disgraceful, and evinces a spirit which cannot be too strongly condemned. South Wales may bid farewell to its industrial peace, and to much of its phenomenal prosperity, if it allows the Miners' Federation to exercise dominion over it.

Piece-work is, of course, individualistic, as every man has to work for himself, and therefore attends to his work, leaving his companions to do the same or not, as they like. It is no concern of his whether they work little or much; what he has to think about is his own work and his own reward. The man who works little, and performs that little indifferently, must take the consequences; the man who works much, and works well, will gain the highest reward. Associations of workmen who employ other workmen, whilst they are against profit sharing, are in favour of piece-work. This is surely a noteworthy fact.

Finally, to sum up this whole question, is not this discussion about profit sharing very largely a matter of words—mere words? Is it not a fact that workmen under the present weekly wage system are really participating in profits? Their wages are paid out of profits; when profits cease to be earned their wages will cease to be paid. Wherefore, then, all this ado, all this pother, about profit sharing? Working men do actually now share the profits of production with their employers, and their share is as large as it would be under any other system that might be substituted for the present one. The moral of all this, both for employers and employed, is surely this—"Let well alone."

Of co-operation it is, happily, possible to speak in terms of unqualified approval and commendation. Its foundation principle is sound. That principle is self-help, or more properly perhaps, self-help by means of mutual help, or mutual help by means of self-help. For co-operation, like Mercy, is twice blessed; "it blesseth him that gives, and

him that takes." Its peculiar distinction is that it cannot benefit one member without benefiting all. In both its forms, distributive and productive, it is deserving of every encouragement. For there is no Socialistic element in it, though there is a social element, which is indeed its very life. It makes no appeal to, places no reliance on, the State; its appeal is to the legitimate self-interest and the manly pride of the workman, to that robust independence which has ever been his chiefest glory. So far as it succeeds it can only result in making the workman more free, more self-reliant, more capable and experienced, and therefore more averse to dependence upon the State and less likely to be deluded by Socialism.

Co-operation is not an attack upon capital or capitalists; it is an attempt to create more capital and to increase the number of capitalists. Therefore it protects and cherishes and encourages capital in every possible way. It contains no element hostile to capital, and it never so much as lifts a finger to destroy capital; on the contrary, it is from the necessity of its nature friendly to capital, and its constant anxiety is to diffuse it more widely. It is not an assault upon private property; it is a recognition of it, and it will prove to be a bulwark in its defence. Working men who associate together in a co-operative enterprise deal with their own property and not with other people's; they can only accumulate that property by the practice of such virtues as prudence, diligence, and providence; and in the management of the property thus acquired they learn from that most efficient of all teachers, experience, how difficult it is to wisely manage property, to prevent its being frittered away, and to cause it to be productive.

Herein, of course, co-operation differs absolutely from the new Trade Unionism, with which indeed it has nothing in common. The two can never coalesce, though one may absorb the other into itself, and make it a part of itself. Socialistic Trade Unionists are making feeble attempts to fraternise with co-operators, and co-operators are endeavouring, still more feebly, to reciprocate these kindly attentions. But there is, and can be, no true sympathy between the two, and only one result can come out of this chilly and artificial fraternisation, and that is the gulping down of co-operation

into the capacious maw of Socialism. The purpose of the Trade Unionists is to swallow the co-operators, and just now they are licking and beslaving their intended victim preparatory to bolting it down their throat. The unctuous manner of the Socialists towards the co-operators, their honeyed words and effusive caresses, are all so much web spun by the spider to attract the fly. If ever the Socialist tiger and the co-operative lamb lie down together, the latter will be inside the former. It is a mystery that co-operators themselves should apparently be so blind in regard to the devices of their disguised enemies. When Socialists like Mr. Tom Mann go up and down the country advocating co-operation it is indeed difficult to measure the confusion which prevails. What concord hath co-operation with Socialism? What had the Rochdale Pioneers in common with the pioneers of the new Trade Unionism?

Co-operation has not, unfortunately, so far fulfilled the expectations of its promoters, even in its common, or distributive, form, and still less in its exceptional, or productive form. Probably it never will fulfil those anticipations. Even in Rochdale and Oldham, and other similar northern towns and districts where it is the strongest, it has not in any appreciable degree ousted the ordinary retail shopkeeper, who apparently does as well as he ever did, nor has it to any perceptible extent displaced the private capitalist and manufacturer. Its success has been mainly in the direction of shop-keeping, or distributing commodities produced by others; in the direction of producing commodities for itself it is as yet merely an experiment, and is in its infancy. Nevertheless, there is no reason why we should not encourage it; it is good, and it does good, as far as it goes. It is, and must be, while it remains true to itself, antagonistic to Socialism, and will be an ally on the side of those who are fighting against Socialism, which alone is a sufficient reason for supporting it.

There is, however, grave reason to fear that co-operation has had its chance and its day; that it has allowed its great opportunity to pass by unimproved; and that it will not again, at all events for many years, be so favoured by wind and tide as it was up to a few years ago. Certainly it will never satisfy the classes who are represented by the Trade

Union Congress and who support the Independent Labour Party and the Social Democratic Federation. For these clamour for the nationalisation of both land and capital, for the collectivisation, in other words the confiscation and redistribution, of property of every kind. Co-operation is too rational and honest, too sober and slow, for people of this kind ; they scout and condemn it as an old-fashioned and discredited method of social reform which has had its day. Social reformers and politicians, however, would act wisely if they gave more attention to co-operation, and refused to patronise or countenance chimerical and dishonest schemes of dealing with property.

Of all that has been said in this chapter, the following is the substance. First : That Trade Unionism, in the form which it has assumed under the influence of Socialism, is wholly to be condemned as a danger to the community, and that it must either be reformed and regulated by the law, or suppressed. Secondly : That Conciliation and Arbitration, so far as they can be promoted and applied voluntarily, are good and worthy to be encouraged ; but that any element of compulsion in connection with them would render them repugnant instead of attractive, and nugatory instead of efficient. Thirdly : That profit sharing is not sound in theory, and has not proved itself to be successful in practice ; that the facts concerning it do not warrant the conclusion that it can ever be generally adopted, or, that if it were so adopted, it could fulfil the anticipations and predictions of its advocates : and that, therefore, employers would be well-advised to have no part or lot in it. Fourthly ; That co-operation, being based upon sound principles, and successful in practice so far as it has been applied, deserves every encouragement from those who respect the sanctity of private property, and who desire to promote the welfare of the people on the principle of self-help as opposed to State-help. Fifthly, and finally : The general contention of the writer is that any organisation, scheme, or device, which cripples the liberty of the individual, or filches from him his property, under whatever specious or philanthropic pretext, is an evil thing, towards which honest men can exhibit no friendliness or even tolerance.

CHAPTER IV.

THE APPLICATION OF THE CHRISTIAN VIRTUES TO THE SOLUTION OF THE INDUSTRIAL PROBLEMS OF OUR TIMES.

THIS work will have been written to little purpose if the reader has not been already convinced of the impolicy and impracticability of dealing with economic questions by violent and arbitrary methods. We have treated successively of the legal and political solutions, of the revolutionary and socialistic solutions, and of the economical and moral solutions, which are proposed in turn to be applied to industrial problems. As to the legal and political remedies which are suggested, it has been shown that the region within which the law can operate with efficiency and safety in regard to economical questions is a very limited one indeed, and that when law steps out of this narrow region and arbitrarily interferes with the hours of labour, with contracts, with accumulations, and with exchanges, the results are injurious and perilous to the best interests of society. It has been one of our leading aims to show to working men on the one hand that the less they trust in mere legislation the better for themselves; and to convince legislators on the other hand that, however much they desire to abolish social and economical evils by law, the task is wholly beyond their powers; and further, that by attempting the impossible they will at once demonstrate their own egregious folly and mock the miseries of the people whose hopes they raise only to disappoint them and sink them into deeper despair than ever.

How small, of all that human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure,
Still to ourselves in every place consigned,
Our own felicity we make or find.

It may be affirmed that the simple carrying out of the Golden Rule by every man in his relations with his neighbour would, of itself, settle all our industrial disputes and sweep away all social evils. If, to-morrow, every man in

England would begin really to act upon the principle of doing unto others as he would have others do to him, all the wrongs, both of the individual and of the community, would vanish as if by magic. This, however, is a truism. It is also an ideal, and an ideal which we are not likely to see realised for many a long age to come. It may be well, therefore, to indicate a little more in detail what Christian virtues we have in our mind, when we say that the application of such virtues would solve our industrial problems.

First, then, we say that the Christian virtue most conspicuously absent from our discussions and proposals of social reform, and, yet, most imperatively needed in these proposals and discussions, is the *spirit of justice*. Christians, above all others, should be distinguished for their love of justice and for their justness in their dealings with all men. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ stand aloof from injustice" is an Apostolic injunction which never needed to be practised more than it does now. Justice is the foundation of civilised order. It is the cement which binds together the members of a civilised community. Confidence in the justice of the laws, in the justice of those who administer them, in the justice of the men with whom we do business or with whom we enter into social relationships, is absolutely essential to intercourse being carried on. Bishop Latimer, in his sermon on "Our Daily Bread," with a profound prescience, places social justice foremost among the material needs of man. He says: "Now the first and principal thing that we have need of in this life is the magistrate; without a magistrate we should never live well and quietly. Then it is necessary and most needful to pray unto God for them, that the people may have rest, and apply their business, every man to his calling; the husbandman in tilling and ploughing, the artificer in his business. . . . Therefore in this petition we pray unto God for our magistrates, that they may rule and govern this realm well and godly; and keep us from invasions of alienates and strangers; and to execute justice and punish malefactors. And this is so requisite that we cannot live without it. Therefore, when we say, 'Give us this day our daily bread,' we pray for the king, his councillors, and all his officers.

. . . And when I pray for them, I pray for myself; for I pray for them that they may rule so that I and all men may live quietly, and at rest. And to this end we desire a quiet life, that we may the better serve God, hear His word, and live after it. . . . Therefore, to pray for a quiet life, that is as much as to pray for a godly life, that we may serve God in our calling, and get our living uprightly. So it appeareth, that praying for magistrates is as much as to pray for ourselves."

In these days there is a spirit of injustice abroad, but it is so disguised in its character, and so subtle in its operations, that it is frequently either not perceived at all or is taken to be something altogether different from what it really is. Satan transforms himself into an angel of light, and in this guise he succeeds in gaining the co-operation—almost the affection—of men who, if they could penetrate his disguise, would spend their last breath in opposing him, and in destroying all his works. Thousands of excellent Christian men and women who would be incapable of a petty theft would nevertheless think it a virtuous action to assist in passing a law which would take from the rich what absolutely belongs to them and give it to the poor who have no right to it; just as thousands of such people thought it a righteous deed to take money out of the pockets of widows and orphans who hold shares in the London Docks in order to pay to dock labourers higher wages than they were entitled to. There are no more dangerous foes to society than those who call good evil, and evil good, and who, in consequence of this perversion of the moral sense, are striving to do evil to the community under the pretence that it is good. That many of these people are sincere in their beliefs does not make them in any degree less harmful. A man who does wrong sincerely does more and greater wrong than a wrong-doer who is insincere. The class of people against whom we most need to be on our guard in these times is that class which has justice in its mouth and injustice in its right hand.

This spirit of injustice is manifesting itself in two main directions. In the political sphere it is striving to induce working men to coalesce for the primary purpose of benefiting themselves, and of benefiting themselves by injuring the

classes above them. It is teaching working men that the noblest use they can make of their political power is to selfishly employ it as an instrument for their own material advancement; in other words, as an instrument for possessing themselves of that which they have not earned, to which they are not entitled, which belongs to somebody else, and can only be made to belong to them by political brigandage and legislative violence,

Thousands of men are engaged in this country to-day in teaching working men, both through the Press and from the platform, that political right is moral right; that Acts of Parliament supersede both the Decalogue and the teachings of Jesus Christ; and that their supreme aim should be so to use their political power as to gain for themselves shorter hours of labour; higher wages, better dwellings, pensions in their old age, and such like things; and that if they can only elect legislators enough to be the instruments of carrying out this selfish policy, and thereby get it carried out, they will do well, whatever consequences may follow to other classes of the community, or to the nation in general. These advanced modern Christians teach that, although the individual man may not steal, a Parliament may steal, and that the precepts of the New Testament, whatever application they may have to individuals, have no binding force upon Parliament. Legislatures are above all law, divine or human. As for the individual elector, who votes for the stealing being done by Parliament, he shelters himself under the subterfuge that at all events it is not he who commits the robbery. And so we have all kinds of proposals that Parliament should take the land of one class, the capital of another class, and even the brains and the bodies of a third class, and do with them whatsoever it wills, without any regard at all to the wishes, the liberties, or even the rights of the people who possess these things.

In the economical sphere, this spirit of injustice is showing itself in similar forms. What an individual workman would be ashamed to demand from his employer, because he knows that he has not earned it and does not deserve it, five hundred or one thousand men will ask with the most unblushing impudence. The injustice of coercing an

employer into paying them more wages than their labour is worth never seems to enter into their heads. Similarly, an individual workman would think it unbecoming to go to his employer and attempt to dictate to him the conditions upon which his capital should be used and his business conducted; but a combination of men will thus dictate to the employer, and think that they are doing a most righteous act. That the capital invested in the business belongs to the employer, and that all the risks and losses of the business must be borne by him, never seem to enter their thoughts. The demand that the hours of labour should be shortened, whilst the wages remain the same, is clearly an unjust demand, simply because it would be taking so much money out of the pockets of the employer for which no equivalent would be rendered. The demand that an employer should dismiss non-unionist workmen is a more unjust demand still, for it infringes at once the rights and liberties both of the employer and of the free workman. An employer has the right to buy labour in whatsoever market he pleases, and a workman has the right to sell his labour in the best market he can find, and upon conditions which approve themselves to his own judgment. Nothing could be more unjust or more preposterous than that a body of workmen, because they work in a certain trade or at a certain factory, should arrogate to themselves the authority to declare who shall and who shall not work in the said trade or factory. These workmen are merely contractors who have sold their labour to the employer on certain contract terms; when the employer fulfils his part of the contract, as he does by paying the weekly wages due to the workmen, these workmen have no further rights in or claims upon the concern; they have received what they are entitled to, and all that they are entitled to, by the terms of the contract, namely, their full share of the profit of production, and they have no claim, legal, equitable, or moral, to anything beyond this. Yet they are perpetually making claims to something beyond it. Indeed, some of them do not scruple to claim that the whole capital and business of the employer belongs of right to them. All such claims are monstrously unjust.

Of course, the injustice is not always upon the workman's

side. There are unjust employers as well as unjust workmen, and the obligation to be strictly just in all dealings is as binding upon the employer as it is upon the employed. Nevertheless, it is strictly true to say that injustice is much more frequently manifested by workmen than it is by masters. Not perhaps because masters are naturally more inclined to be upright than workmen, but rather because masters, by reason of their fewness, have not the same opportunity of carrying out their wishes as workmen have. The numerical superiority of the workmen and their power of combination—especially if it is unscrupulously used—give them immense advantages over the employer class in these days of Household Suffrage. Moreover, an employer is practically bound to pay a workman fair and just wages, that is to say the market value of the workman's labour, simply because if one employer did not do this another would. The workman has a free market for his labour, and where he has such a market no employer can take much advantage of him for long. Over and above all this, however, English employers as a class are honourably distinguished by their uprightness, their considerate treatment of those whom they employ, and not infrequently by their generosity.

The second of the Christian virtues which are eminently needed in our times in connection with industrial problems is *broad and intelligent sympathy*. Not sympathy merely; for there is a sympathy which is blind and narrow. Such sympathy was displayed by the public, or by a section or sections of the public, during the Dock strike, and during every great strike sympathy of this kind is sure to be manifested by the same class of people. They had abundant sympathy with the dock labourers, but none at all with the dock directors or the dock shareholders. Yet these latter were deserving of sympathy too—perhaps even more deserving of it than the labourers. For the latter, when the worst came to the worst, always had public charity to fall back upon, whereas the poor orphans and widows, whose all was invested in the docks, might starve to death in secret, and nobody care one jot about them. Sympathy which is uninformed and contracted may do much more harm than good, and it probably will do so. It did so in the case of

the Dock strike, as we have clearly demonstrated, and it did so in connection with the other great strikes which have followed upon the Dock strike during the last two years. What is needed is an all-round sympathy. Employers should sympathise with workmen; workmen should sympathise with employers; those who are neither workmen nor employers should sympathise with both classes, but not with either one to the exclusion of the other.

Sympathy of this all-embracing nature would find abundant methods of expressing itself. The employer who sympathises with his workpeople might (as many employers have done) provide for them reading rooms, libraries, baths, music, and other recreations, and also show a paternal interest in their welfare, especially when they were in sickness or trouble. The fact is an employer might in some respects be a father to his workpeople. Workmen, on the other hand, might show their sympathy with their employer. If they knew him to be in difficulties, they might refuse to take their wages for a week, and thus help him to tide over the emergency; or when trade was depressed, and the employer was perhaps working the business at a loss, they might voluntarily agree to a reduction in wages. There is not a workshop or a manufactory in the land where the workmen, if they truly sympathised with their employer and desired to assist him, might not save him a large amount of money every year. As for the general public, they should judge both employers and employed impartially, awarding praise to that party which deserves it and blame to the other party, always bearing in mind that their duty is not only to be sympathetic, but to be just as well.

It is notorious that the relations now existing between employers and employed are, in the main, based rather upon antipathy than upon sympathy. The two classes are to a great extent hostile the one towards the other. For this unfortunate condition of affairs workmen must be held mainly responsible. They have during the last quarter of a century, and particularly during the last four or five years, developed a temper which clearly indicates that they mean to get the upper hand if possible. Labour is no longer content to work with capital on equal terms; it desires supreme dominion. Capital cannot, of course, consent to

stultify or efface itself, and consequently it is compelled to fight for its own possessions and rights. Hence the state of industrial war in which we now find ourselves in this country. This state of war, as was shown in the last chapter, necessarily tends to destroy what little sympathy between employers and employed has been left to us, and to blunt and harden the finer features of both parties. Human nature is human nature, and it will remain so in spite of all the impracticable dreams of Socialistic representations of society. And, while human nature remains what it is, it is impossible for employers to sympathise with those who, instead of sympathising and co-operating with them, manifest a malicious pleasure in thwarting their purposes and injuring their interests. He who would have friends must show himself friendly. If working men wish their employers to be friends to them they must show that they are the friends of their employers. If they act as the enemies of their employers, as too many of them are now disposed to do, they must not be surprised if they find these employers acting as enemies towards them. Sympathy between the two classes would do more to prevent friction and dispute, and promote the peace and prosperity of both classes alike, than all the legislative enactments or all the Boards of Conciliation in the world.

The third of the Christian virtues which may be mentioned (and the last which can be mentioned here) as essential to a wise solution of economical problems is *forbearance*. This is a quality which must be manifested by one man towards another, or by one class towards another, when they have very much to do with each other, if they are to get along well together. All human beings are frail and faulty. The most perfect of them need at times to be borne with by reason of their passions, or infirmities, or wickedness. To expect absolute perfection in human beings, to expect that we shall never be called upon to exercise towards them lenient and generous judgments, is obviously unreasonable. Even where people are joined together by a true love, as in the married state, the need for mutual forbearance still exists. They need to bear and forbear. An old minister expressed this truth very quaintly, but forcibly, when he advised a newly-married pair to keep

two bears in the house—"bear and forbear." In like manner we may say that these two bears ought to be kept in every factory and business establishment, where the relations of the persons concerned are based upon mere business relationships or distant sympathies. In order to the exercise of this forbearance some mutual knowledge and mutual regard are necessary. A certain degree of mutual knowledge is implied in the relation of employer and employed; an employer usually knows something of his workmen, and a workman knows something of his master. Whether they have a mutual regard for each other, however, depends upon the character of each, or at all events on the estimate which they have formed of each other's character. If the employer would take into consideration the fact that the workman is not cultured, that he suffers from limitation of view, that he has strong class prejudices and antipathies, and that at times the monotony of his work and his life begets a sense of weariness and despair, he would be much more ready to sympathise and bear with the workman, even when the latter is in the wrong, than he would otherwise be. On the other hand, if the workman would reflect upon the fact that the employer has his own peculiar anxieties and worries, that he has serious risks to run, and large interests at stake, and that in these days of severe competition he needs to have all his wits about him, and to work hard with his brain, he would not be surprised that the employer should sometimes be irritable, and perhaps unreasonable. He would be tolerant of the faults of the employer.

It is obvious that if masters and men were actuated by a desire to deal justly with each other, that if they cherished towards one another a spirit of sympathy, that if they had the disposition to patiently bear with each other's infirmities, disputes between them could never arise. Unfriendliness would be nipped in the bud. Differences would be composed before they could develop into disputes. As for strikes, with their bitterness and violence, they would become impossible. This Christian temper is the only true and infallible remedy for social ills; this alone searches and probes to the seat and root of the disease, and by its beneficent energy expels it. All other so-called remedies are but

palliatives at the best ; for they are mechanical and external, utterly destitute of power to change the motives or to eradicate the selfish propensities of man. Acts of Parliament, Boards, Councils, Associations, &c., however necessary and effective they may be within their proper sphere, are clumsy expedients which touch only the outer man ; whereas the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ is a spiritual energy which affects the heart, changes the affections and dispositions, renews the nature, of the individual. This is the grand characteristic of Christianity viewed as an engine of social reform ; this also is the cardinal and fundamental difference between Christianity and Socialism. The sum of all wisdom upon this matter is this : " Change the man, and you change all ; mend the individual, and you mend all." That was Christ's method, and it has never been improved upon. Centuries of experience prove it to have been transcendantly wise and transcendantly powerful. But how is the man to be changed ? Not by Acts of Parliament, nor by Congresses or Unions, but by the love and grace of God manifested in His Son, Jesus Christ. Therefore let all who labour for the social welfare, all who wish to promote the true well-being of the people, be assured that the most perfect method of social regeneration is the preaching and the practice of the Gospel ; and the Gospel as Christ and His Apostles taught it, as the means of saving and perfecting the individual man, not some new-fangled travesty of it dubbed " Social Christianity." The New Testament knows no " Social Christianity ;" it knows only individual Christianity, *i.e.*, Christianity preached by the individual man to the individual man, received by the individual, translated into conduct by the individual, influencing and moulding society through the individual. This is the chief need of our age, as of all ages. We do not want churches as such to take part in social reform after an organised and political fashion ; we want individual Christians to labour in a spirit of self-sacrifice for the salvation, moral and physical, of individuals who are not Christians.

Christ's method was spiritual, aiming at and working through the individual ; His great aim was to develop the life of man all round, mentally, physically, morally ; and His way of doing this was to make the man free through the

truth. The method of Socialism is mechanical and outward, beginning and ending with the society, and never really touching the individual; it is merely economic and materialistic; it does not develop life, but suppresses it. The Christian can enjoy and use liberty, and he can tolerate the use of it by others: but the Socialist is always a baby who cannot be trusted with liberty himself, and will not allow it to others. The one is "the Lord's freeman," the other is the slave of materialism. Socialism does not, cannot, understand Christ's great saying: "The life is more than meat;" it denies or perverts it, and says: "The meat is everything." Socialism is a coarse and sordid system at the best, a slightly refined animalism, which always has its eye upon "the meat," upon gross and material enjoyment, upon brutish contentment; the grandeur, the heroism, the Divine potency of life, are hid from its narrow and distorted vision. Christianity says: "Leave the capitalist in full and undisturbed possession of his freedom and his rights; leave the workman in equally ample and secure enjoyment of his rights and liberties; but let both use their liberty and their property for each other's good. Let them be *men* and brothers." Socialism says: "Deprive both workman and capitalist of all they possess, including the highest and noblest possession of all—liberty; let them be no longer free men, but slaves, compelled to do, not what they think is their duty, but what other people think they ought to do. Let them be equals—and *slaves*." One is the way of liberty and of the highest life; the other is the way of bondage and death. That is not a true brotherhood which rests upon force; that only is true which rests upon love. The Christian ideal of society is that social state wherein every man, loving God as his Father, will love man as his brother; wherein the rights of each individual will be sacredly preserved, but where each individual will, not of restraint but willingly, use all that he is and has in the service of the brotherhood. The law of such a community will not be one of sheer altruism, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and *not* thyself;" it will be the Christian law, compounded of self-love and goodwill—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour *as* thyself." In such a society two tendencies will be at work, not antagonistic but accordant, one towards the

perfecting of the individual man, the other towards the more complete and harmonious co-operation of the individual men. The latter is the only form of Socialism that is recognised or promoted by Christianity, and it is not only consistent, but co-existent, with Individualism, and it cannot exist apart from it. Where these two tendencies are at work counteracting yet assisting each other, society is in a healthy state.

If it be contended that Christianity, working upon and through the individual, is too weak a force to effect the regeneration of humanity, it must be replied that this is wholly untrue. Christianity was born into a world where slavery was the normal condition, and in which corruptions and immoralities of the most abominable kind were rampant. Christianity destroyed those evils. How? Not by any direct attack upon them, not even by systematic and organised action on the part of the Church, but by the gentler, yet more powerful, operation of spiritual truth, radiating from spiritual men and permeating society. Jesus Christ never said "Strike the fetters off the slave, and let him go free"; but He did teach men to say—"Our Father, who art in Heaven"—which really involved the emancipation of the slave. The Apostles never fulminated against slavery as an institution, or denounced slaveowners; they did what was better, they preached the essential brotherhood of man in Christ, growing out of the Fatherhood of God. Before these glorious truths, Divine Fatherhood and human brotherhood, slavery vanished, as the mists are dispersed by the rays of the rising sun. The policy of Christianity with regard to slavery was one of non-interference; as a social institution it was left severely alone. Nevertheless, Christianity abolished slavery; not by direct attack, but by silently undermining its foundations; not by any form of social organisation, but by burning the truth into the conscience of *the individual man*; not by the clumsy expedient of uprooting, but by the higher process of putting something better into the soil, which gradually crushed and killed the degenerate growth. Slavery was a worse evil than any with which we have to do; it was more deeply rooted and more inveterate; it was more inseparably intertwined with the ideas and

practices of mankind; and it seemed more impossible to eradicate it. But eradicated it has been, though the process was not consummated until centuries after it had commenced.

This is God's method of reform; it is slow, but sure, There is no reaction from it; the territory thus won is never surrendered; slavery can never revive. This method has the further recommendation that it does not arouse the passions and antagonisms of those who are interested in the perpetuation of these evils. "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation," and before they are aware of it the Kingdom of God is among them, and hath wrought marvellous transformations.

As it was with slavery, so will it be with the evils which confront us in these times. What is wrong between Capital and Labour can be put right by the action of Christianity in diffusing a spirit of righteousness, and better put right by that than by any other means. The process is gradual, but it is effective. Socialism would put all things right by the iron hand of the State, by the rough and summary method of compulsion, and in so trying to put things right it would make them more wrong than ever. Human beings cannot be dragooned into right relations towards each other; they cannot be moved by machinery from without. But they can be moved by moral forces, acting from within. Christianity relies upon the power of truth, not upon the power of legislation; it trusts to liberty, not to repression; it deals with the heart, not with the circumstances; in a word it seeks to ensure right action on the part of men by making them right-hearted. Let the employer be righteous and the workman righteous, and then they will treat each other righteously. Such action will solve the problems at issue between capital and labour more effectually than all the legislation and arbitration in the world. Better than Trade Unionism or Socialism, better than Conciliation or Co-operation, is the simple, direct, and faithful teaching of Christianity.

The sum of the matter, then, is, that if employers and employed, under the influence of Christian truth, would exercise justice and sympathy and forbearance towards each other, they would not only render all other suggested

remedies for labour disputes unnecessary, but they would render it impossible for the disputes themselves to come into existence. But men will never be thus just and sympathetic and forbearing towards each other until they come under the power of the love and the grace of God. Thus we arrive at the conclusion that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is, after all, the only effectual remedy for the ills alike of the individual and of society. When men do what Jesus Christ teaches them to do, namely, to love God with all their heart and soul and mind and strength, and their neighbours as themselves, then they will exercise justice and generosity, sympathy and tolerance, helpfulness and brotherliness towards each other in all the relationships of life. Wherefore let all who are interested in the solution and the prevention of these evils cease not to preach and to teach that Gospel which is at once an evangel of peace and good-will to men and a revelation of God's glory.

CHAPTER V.

A FORECAST.

To begin with, a few words on the present condition of the working classes in this country appear to be called for. The condition of those classes was never before as good as it is now. The assumption of Socialistic writers and agitators that the rich are ever growing richer, and the poor ever poorer, as a necessary result of the present social order, is disproved by all the facts of the case. Dr. Giffen has shown that during the last fifty years there has been a steady and continuous increase in the rate of wages, not in one trade simply, but in all trades, "ranging from twenty, and in most cases from fifty to a hundred per cent., and in one or two instances more than one hundred per cent. This understates, I believe, the real extent of the change."

Whilst wages have thus enormously increased, hours of labour have considerably diminished, so that more wages are not paid because more work is done.* The agricultural labourer has shared fully in this increased money return for shorter hours of labour. Sir James Caird puts the increase of farm labourers' wages at sixty per cent above the rate which prevailed before the repeal of the corn laws.

Wages, then, have increased, whilst hours of labour have decreased. But further, the purchasing power of money is much greater than it formerly was, insomuch that the working man is able to procure a much greater supply of commodities for a sovereign than he formerly could. Besides this, working men inhabit much roomier and healthier

* See "The Progress of the Working Classes in the Last Half Century," by R. Giffen.

dwellings than they did fifty years ago; the death rate among them has considerably decreased; and pauperism is not much more than half as prevalent as it was half a century since. Dr. Giffen states that "pauperism was nearly breaking down the country half a century ago;" at that time the expenditure on poor relief was almost as great as it is now; though the country contained only half the population. He shows that in 1849 there were 1,676,000 paupers, whilst in 1891 there were only 974,421. It is matter of common knowledge that the comforts, conveniences, and luxuries of life have increased during the last half century to an extent that is amazing, and the poor have proportionately enjoyed a larger share of this increase than any other class. Dr. Giffen asserts that: "The rich have become more numerous, but no richer individually; the poor are to some extent fewer; and those who remain 'poor' are, on the average, twice as well off as they were fifty years ago. The '*poor*' have thus had almost all the benefit of the great material advance of the last fifty years." A well known French writer, M. Anatole Leroy Beaulieu, says: "Far from seeing their condition grow worse with the progress of industry, peasants and artisans are the two classes of society which have most benefited by the increase of wealth. Of the three factors of production, the three usual joint sharers in the products of industry, we find that labour is the one whose share tends to increase most rapidly; whilst interest upon capital and the profits of the employer have decreased with the progress of wealth, the workman's wages, the remuneration of labour, is ever increasing. . . . We are witnessing a phenomenon which is *nothing short of an economical revolution—a revolution to the detriment of capital, and in favour of the proletariat.*"

Whilst the condition of the working classes in this country has improved so largely as to present a perfect contrast to their condition fifty years ago, the condition of workmen in many other civilised countries of Europe is not even now so good as was the condition of our own working classes half a century since. Most remarkable facts and figures relating to the rate of wages now paid in this country, as compared with that which prevails in France, Belgium, Germany, &c.,

have recently been published, but space will not admit of their being reproduced here.*

It follows that no revolutionary measures are needed in order to remedy such evils as still remain to be redressed. That there are such evils among us no sane man will deny, and it is the part of true statesmanship to devise safe and effectual remedies for these evils, *in so far as they are caused, or can be removed, by law*. But no violent innovations or exceptional measures are needed, and no undue interference with liberty or dishonest dealing with property ought to be tolerated for one moment on the plea that the end sought is the amelioration of the condition of the poor. The condition of the poor will never be improved by robbing the rich. What we have got to do is simply to follow the safe path of progress which has already led us to such ample freedom and such abundant prosperity.

It follows also that the demagogues and politicians who are urging a break-up of the existing social order are actuated either by malignity or ignorance. Many of them are too obviously actuated by both. They simply envy those who are better off than themselves, and are seeking to use political power in order to despoil the owners of property and distribute their possessions among those who have no right to them. Socialism and Anarchy, we repeat, are at the bottom one and the same thing; they originate in the same motive and they aim at the same objects; and to a large extent they would use the same means. Anarchism aims at the abolition of all Government, and Socialism would substitute despotism for freedom—such a despotism as would infallibly lead to the overthrow of all Government. But as regards the existing social order, both Anarchy and Socialism hate it with a deadly hatred, and would use the most violent methods in order to destroy it. The motto of

* See Reports of the International Congress of Textile Factory Workers, held at Manchester in July, 1894; also Sir Charles Oppenheimer's Report to the Foreign Office on "Labour Time and Labour Wages in Germany," 1893; also the volumes issued by the Board of Trade giving the results of the census and wages, compiled by Dr. Giffen; Mr. Drage's Reports to the Labour Commission; and Mr. Elliott's Report to the Board of Trade on "The Remuneration of Capital and Labour," 1891.

continental Anarchy is this : "Everything for everybody, from Government to women ; war against property ; war against families ; war against God." We have shown that this also is the programme of the Socialists.

Unquestionably these are results of democracy. Political power has been placed, fully and suddenly, in the hands of people who have not sufficient intelligence or sense of responsibility to use it wisely, and who therefore become an easy prey to the agitator or the caucus-monger. Yet our statesmen are ever giving more political power to the very people who have proved themselves unfit to use any such power at all, as witness the passing of the Parish Councils Bill in our own country and the recent dangerous extension of the franchise in Belgium. The great rock ahead is the incapacity of the average voter to rise above selfish and sectional considerations, and to use his political power as a patriot for his country's good. On this rock the ship of State may yet be wrecked. England's downfall, if it ever comes, will be brought about, not by attack or invasion from other nations ; not even from the supineness or effeminacy or corruption of many of its wealthier classes (though this is a grave danger) ; but by the shortsightedness of the newly enfranchised electors in attempting to use their united vote as an instrument of oppression and spoliation.

The point from which danger is to be most immediately apprehended is the condition of the so-called unemployed, and the exploitation of these idlers and loafers by Socialistic politicians for their own ends. There is a great deal of mawkish sentiment abroad in connection with this subject which is simply nauseating to honest men. Everybody will sympathise with the really industrious workman who is out of employment and wishes to obtain it, and anybody would be willing to do everything possible to assist him. It is not men of this class, however, who make up demonstrations of "unemployed," indulge in disorder, and denounce capitalists and legislators. The unemployed demonstrations, which are now a regular feature of the winter season in London and other large cities, would possess no importance whatever but for the fact that certain organs and organisations find it to their interest to exploit them. There are indications, however, that this agitation in regard to the

"unemployed" will lead to a demand for municipal workshops, which would, of course, be run at the expense of the general body of tax-payers, and would be as complete a failure as were similar institutions in Paris. Already the Works Committee of the London County Council has reported in favour of such workshops, and the late Chairman of the Council, in his annual address, bestowed his commendation upon the suggestion. This is an alarming fact. Such a Government as we have now is not for a moment to be trusted on a matter of this kind, and we may any day find ourselves involved in costly and perilous schemes of a Socialistic character. We are in the age of experiment. The new voters are clamorous for all sorts of experiments to be tried, but on the sole condition that they are tried at the expense of property-owners.

It would, however, be a fatal mistake if the owners of property and the friends of liberty were to yield up everything in the spirit of despair, and allow their enemies to work their will upon them and upon the country. The great lesson surely is, not that those who value freedom and justice should do nothing, *but that they should do something different from what they have been doing hitherto*. Emphatically the duty of the hour is that all intelligent and substantial citizens should be up and doing. Two courses are open to electors of wealth and position. The first is a policy of abstention all round. They are being urged in some quarters to throw up their commissions in the army and navy; to resign their offices in the civil and diplomatic services; in Parliament and the Church; on Benches of magistrates, County Councils and Local Boards; in a word, to withdraw their services and influence from every department of the country's life which now profits by them. That would be an effective course, but a very extreme one. Undoubtedly it would cripple the country; but that would be very poor patriotism: it would indeed be an ignoble display of selfishness, and of malignant selfishness, and we are persuaded that the aristocracy and gentry of England can never stoop so low as to take this course, at all events until they have received much greater provocation than they have done hitherto. At the same time, it may be pointed out that if they did take this course they would only be

imitating the example of the working class voters in preferring their own personal and class interests to those of the nation. The working classes now refuse to be taxed even for the support of the army and navy, upon which their welfare depends even more absolutely than does the welfare of the well-to-do classes. Only the other day the working class voters declined to contribute anything whatever to increase the efficiency of the navy, and their democratic Chancellor of the Exchequer had to squeeze the money out of the unfortunate landowners through the Death Duties. And it is practically certain that if the country were to be involved in war to-morrow, no Chancellor of the Exchequer would dare to impose new taxes upon the working man voter. He would simply clap threepence or sixpence on the income tax, and thus make the well-to-do electors pay the expenses of the war.

No. There is a more excellent way. Let those who have something to lose, and who prize liberty as the dearest of earthly possessions, do as they have done, and as they are now doing, with the exception of blindly supporting the present political parties. Let them be no longer deluded by empty names. If they act wisely they will at once, and in the clearest and most emphatic terms, cause it to be known to Liberals and Unionists and Conservatives alike, that henceforth their money, their votes, and their labours can only be relied upon on the condition that politicians keep their hands from picking and stealing. If they will take this course they will be the means of saving all that is best in the present parties from shipwreck, and what is far more important, they will also be the means of preventing the sacrifice of the country to that hideous idol—Socialism. Let them keep at the centre of affairs so that they may be able in the day of trial to use the army and navy for patriotic ends. It is only too likely that occasion for their services will arise before long; for it is the opinion of many careful observers that what is called "the labour problem" will now be solved only by physical force. However this may be, the dangers upon us are sufficiently grave and alarming to warrant all lovers of freedom and all defenders of property in closing up their ranks in one solid phalanx.

A "revolt of the rich" is the one thing necessary in the

present crisis of our history. Let them refuse to be any longer fooled by politicians of any name or party; let them refuse longer to find the sinews of war for those who turn their guns against them; let their motto be—"No alliance with Labour parties, whether they come in Liberal or Conservative guise; no quarter to Socialism, in any of its forms." Let both Liberals and Conservatives who believe in liberty and in honesty rally to the support of freedom and justice and morality.

Let us not be misunderstood, however. Although we deem the present situation to be grave and critical in the extreme, and fraught with perils to the highest interests of the nation, we are not disposed to take a pessimistic view. As regards this grand old country of ours, our motto is—"Nil desperandum." When Adam Smith was informed by Mr. Sinclair, towards the close of the American War, that Burgoyne had surrendered at Saratoga, and when Sinclair insisted that if things went on no better the nation must be ruined, the philosopher calmly replied: "Be assured, my young friend, there's a great deal of ruin in a nation." There is a great deal of ruin in Old England. It will take much to ruin her. But it may be done. We are not afraid of democracy. With Hamilton, one of the framers of the American Constitution, we believe that "the disease upon us is democracy," and that it is our business to checkmate it. Lord Sherbrooke predicted some years ago that we were on the eve of a "frightful democracy." It has come, and frightful enough it truly is. Nevertheless, intelligence and property can hold their own under any system if they like to put forth their power, and there is nothing to fear as regards the future of England, if the educated and propertied classes will simply do their duty. Sitting at ease with folded arms or skulking in their tents, will not do; they must put on the whole armour and come forth into the battlefield, giving no quarter to their hereditary foes, and knowing no rest until those foes are vanquished. The men whose patron saint is St. George need not fear even Socialism. That is indeed the dragon which they have to fight, and a hissing, glaring, venomous, open-mouthed monster it is. At present it forms a saddle upon which the very devil himself is riding; whilst he is leading multitudes

of our countrymen captive at his will. But this is a temporary aberration. The forces of intelligence are not vanquished yet; nor are the resources of reason and morality exhausted. In the brighter day that shall yet surely dawn, humanity will be emancipated from the thrall and rescued from the blight of Socialistic error. The Dragon, with the Old Serpent who is now using it as his instrument, shall be cast down into hell ten thousand fathoms deep, amid the execrations of the multitudes whom it has enslaved, terrorised, deluded, and cursed.

APPENDIX.

IN fulfilment of the promise made in the body of the work, that it would be proved by ample quotation that Socialism would suppress the marriage institution and family life, degrade parenthood, and substitute for these institutions what is euphemistically called Free Love, but which might more properly be called Free Fornication, the following citations from Socialistic authors are adduced.*

We have seen that one of the fundamental principles of Socialism is that the individual has no right in or over himself or herself ; and this logically implies that no man or woman ought to have any freedom of choice as regards the use of personal faculties and capabilities, the disposal of mind or body. This, again, involves the denial of the right of the individual to enter into the marriage union with whomsoever he will, and the assertion of the right of the State to compel him to marry whomsoever it wills. He must love and marry by order of the community, and in its supposed interests.

This aspect of the matter is not evident to everybody, and the majority of Socialistic teachers take pains to hide it. Others, more candid, are very frank about it ; indeed, they appear to be rather proud of the idea that Socialism would regulate sexual relations on precisely the same principles as they are regulated in a stud of racehorses.

* As regards this branch of the subject, the author gladly acknowledges his indebtedness to the editor of the *Liberty Review*, who, in his journal week by week, as well as in occasional extra publications, is doing yeoman's service in the crusade against Socialism.

Let us, then, listen to some of the accredited exponents of Socialism. Out of their mouths we will prove :

1. That the abolition of marriage is as plainly and as necessarily involved in Socialism as the abolition of private property.
2. That the abolition of marriage necessarily involves the destruction of the family institution and of parental and filial relations.
3. That Socialism would substitute for marriage promiscuous sexual relations, which would lead to Universal Prostitution among women, and Free Fornication among men, and, further, would exalt both fornication and prostitution into virtues.

On the first two points the following extracts are conclusive :

"Even now it is necessary that a certain code of morality should be *supposed* to exist, and to have some relation to that religion which, being the creation of another age, has now become a sham. With this sham, moreover, its accompanying morality is also *stupid* . . . and this is clung to with a determination or even ferocity natural enough, since its aim is *the perpetuation of individual property in wealth, in workman, in wife, in child.*"

"The present marriage system is based upon the general supposition of the economic dependence of the woman on the man, and the consequent necessity for his making provision for her which she can legally enforce. This basis would disappear with the advent of social economic freedom, and no binding contract would be necessary between the parties as regards livelihood; while property in children would cease to exist, and every infant that came into the world would be born into full citizenship, &c. Thus a new development of the family would take place . . . an association terminable at the needs of either party."*

This is the statement of Mr. William Morris and Mr. Belfort Bax, two of the most authoritative teachers of Socialism in this country, and it proves these things : That the marriage system would disappear; that family life would be suppressed by the Socialistic State as being out of

* "Socialism : Its Growth and Outcome," pp. 9, 199.

harmony with its genius and methods; that parents would not know their own children, nor children their own parents; that private proprietorship of wife or husband or child would be stamped out; and that the State would encourage and subsidise prostitution and fornication.

In the "Manifesto of the Socialistic League," which ought to be, if anything can be, an authoritative exposition of Socialistic principles, and which is annotated by the League's secretaries, Mr. William Morris and Mr. Belfort Bax, we find the following statements. On page 6 it is stated that "our modern *bourgeois* property-marriage, maintained as it is by its *necessary* complement, universal venal prostitution," is to "give place to kindly and human relations between the sexes." And note F. tells us what those "kindly and human relations" are. "Under a Socialistic system contracts between individuals would be free and unenforced by the community. This would apply to the marriage contract as well as others, and it would become a matter of simple inclination. . . . Nor would a truly enlightened public opinion, freed from *mere theological views* as to chastity, insist on its permanently binding nature in the face of any discomfort or suffering that might come of it." Mr. W. S. Lilly aptly and truly says of Socialism: "As it would abolish pauperism by making all men paupers, so it would abolish prostitution by making all women prostitutes."

Robert Owen did not believe in the family tie, and held that private or single family arrangements must come to an end. All children were to be given up to the State, as the parents were the very worst people to bring up their own offspring. His words are:

"In the New Moral World the irrational names of husband and wife, parent and child, will be heard no more . . . all connection will be the result of affection . . . [woman] in her parturition will be comforted and caressed by the whole community. The child, which would undoubtedly be the property of the whole community," &c.

Oscar Wilde, who has attained unenviable notoriety by putting his creed into practice, says:

"Socialism, Communism, or whatever one chooses to call it, by converting private property into public wealth, and

substituting co-operation for competition, will restore society to its proper condition of a thoroughly healthy organism, and ensure the material well-being of each member of the community. It will, in fact, *give life its proper basis and its proper environment. . . . Socialism annihilates family life, for instance. With the abolition of private property marriage in its present form must disappear. This is part of the programme.*"*

Herr August Bebel, a Socialist leader and writer, quotes with approval John Stuart Mill's statement that "Marriage is, at the present day, the only natural form of serfdom recognised by law." Bebel also quotes Herr Von Stern to this effect :

"Man desires a being that not only loves, but understands him . . . a being that, whenever he appears, irradiates peace, rest, order . . . a being that diffuses over everything that indefinable odour of womanhood which is the vivifying warmth of domestic life." Bebel's commentary on this passage is: "In this would-be song of praise lies the degradation of woman—the basest egotism of man."†

Karl Pearson says :

"If the State is to guarantee wages, it is bound in self-protection to provide that no person shall be born without its consent."‡

"The present marriage laws hinder the Socialist approach to the ideal."

"Because we hold Socialism will ultimately survive as the only tenable moral code, we are convinced that our present marriage customs and present marital law must alike soon collapse."

"Women must have economic independence . . . as long as they depend on other's labour, be it that of husband or any other, they act immorally. If a woman has no children, she must go and work."

"In a Socialist form of Government the sexual relation would vary according to the feelings and wants of

* "The Soul of Man under Socialism," *Fortnightly Review*, February, 1891.

† "Woman in the Past, Present, and Future," pp. 48-51.

‡ "Socialism and Sex," p. 12.

individuals. . . . Children apart, we hold it intolerable that church or society should, in any official form, interfere with lovers. . . . The State is to sanction the number of births ; all others are immoral, because anti-social. . . . In the society of the future the birth of a child *will have social sanction*, or it will not. . . . As national wealth increased, a larger number of births would be allowed, or a larger sum be expended on such as were allowed."

"An unsanctioned birth would receive no recognition from the State ; and, in times of over-population, it might be needful to punish, positively or negatively, both father and mother."

"As such births may be due to ignorance, or *inefficiency of some check system* . . . it would be the duty of the State to scientifically investigate the whole system of checks, and to spread among its citizens a thorough knowledge of such as were harmless and efficient in practice." *

In his work entitled "The Ethics of Free Thought" (apparently because there is no vestige of an ethical idea in it), Mr. Karl Pearson says that "our present marriage customs and marriage laws are destined to suffer great changes ;" that "not improbably, when woman is truly educated and equally developed with man, she will hold that the highest relation of man and woman is akin to that of Lewes and George Eliot, not a union for the birth of children, but the closest form of friendship between man and woman ;" that "in the society of the future a birth will have [that is, *must have*] social sanction ;" that "in times of over-population it might even be needful to punish positively, as well as negatively, both father and mother" who caused a birth without "social sanction ;" and that "for the non-child-bearing woman the sex-relationship, both as to form and substance, ought to be a pure question of taste, a simple matter of agreement between the man and her, in which neither society nor the State would have any need to interfere, a free sexual union, a relation solely of mutual sympathy and affection, its form and direction varying according to the *feelings and wants* of the individuals."

Let the reader imagine—image, picture to himself—the

* "Socialism and Sex," pp. 5-15.

condition of things here indicated. The State, because it pays everybody, is to control and regulate all sexual relations, and no man is to become a father, no woman a mother, without a special permit from the State Department specially charged with these matters! When the population increases too rapidly the State is to punish those who rashly assume the functions of parentage, and is to teach the people how to use such checks as will allow the fullest gratification of the passions unattended by the procreation of children. This is what the State is to do "in times of over-population." But, as France shows us, there are times of under-population as well. What is the State to do then? Of course, by parity of reasoning, it will have to teach and encourage the people to remove all checks upon the increase of population. A special machinery will have to be organised and operated in order to induce the people to breed more rapidly. (We need not be too squeamish in our use of terms, for, as Socialism would degrade human beings into mere animals, we may well apply to them the same terms as we would to brutes.)

What have the opponents of "State regulation of vice" to say to all this? Some of these very people are advocating Socialism, which would not merely regulate both vice and virtue, but would annihilate the distinction between them, and would make it one of its leading aims to promote vice.

"The reproduction of the race *is a social function* . . . and it is the duty of the community to provide for the child-bearer when she, in the exercise of her social function, is unable to provide for herself."*

Mr. G. Bernard Shaw, another prominent Socialist leader, says:

"All progress involves the beating of them [the recognised virtues—honour, chastity, &c.] from their position."

"*Duty* is the primal curse from which we must redeem ourselves."

"Unless woman repudiates her womanliness, her duty to her husband, to her children, to society, to the law, and to

* "Woman and Marriage, or Evolution in Sex," by Havelock Ellis, p. 15.

everyone but herself, she cannot emancipate herself. Therefore woman has to repudiate Duty altogether."*

Professor Goldwin Smith quotes with approval the statement of Mr. Noyes, head of the Oneida Socialistic community, that "religious communities succeed, while the non-religious inevitably fail. Earnest religious conviction does in some way modify human depravity so as to make continuous association possible, and secure to it great material success."

Mr. Goldwin Smith accepts this inference, and adds: "That which is at once common to all successful communities and peculiar to them is the rejection of marriage, whereby they are (1) exempted from the disuniting influence of the separate family, and (2) enabled to accumulate wealth in a way which would be impossible if they have children to maintain."

Of the Rappite community the Professor says:

"Those who have visited the community report that all its members are advanced in years. The end of the Rappite millennium is, in fact, a tontine, which will terminate in a Rappite Astor. The religious bond helped to hold them together during the first years of their existence. We doubt whether even the strong hand of Brigham Young could hold together for a year a Utah combining the separate family and free propagation of children, with community of goods."

"The Oneida community hold property in common; there are no separate interests, incomes, or allowances whatever. *The marriage tie is totally disregarded.* The male and female members pair with each other for a time, and for a time only; not promiscuously, but under the authority of the community, which appears to be guided in regulating these matters by the policy of restraining the increase of its members, partly by physical rules connected with what is styled the scientific propagation of children. The initiative is assigned to the mother, who makes it known to the authorities when she is willing to become a mother. She is not permanently wedded to one partner, and may have two or three in succession. Any so-called permanence can only have reference to the family aggregate. Com-

* "Quintessence of Ibsenism," pp. 6, 18, 43, 44.

munism, in fine, can be rendered practicable only by a standing defiance of morality and virtue. They are wealthy, but more from the factory than the land. A large proportion of the work is done by hired hands. The members of the community are now for the most part capitalists, directors, and employers of labour." *

What we have quoted is quite conclusive as to the antagonism of Socialism towards marriage, the family, and moral purity. None of these could exist under Socialism, which hates them, is eager to destroy them, and would glory in having accomplished the task. Lamartine says, and truly: "Communism of goods leads as a *necessary consequence* to communism of wives, children, and parents; and to the brutalisation of the species."

But, further, Socialism would lead to unbridled lust; to the most brute-like promiscuity in sexual relations; to the most odious prostitution of the procreative energies; and to the most loathsome corruption both of the individual and of the community.

Let us listen to some of the Socialistic "philosophers" again. Mr. Belfort Bax says:

"Supposing that in Russia, or *elsewhere*, a sudden and urgent demand for material resources for party purposes arose, and that much hung on its being immediately satisfied. Supposing again that, as a last resort, a female member of the party were, *without any hypocritical pretence*, to sell her body for the money, would not this be a commendable act? . . . I should say, Yes. Prostitution for private gain is morally repellent. But the same outward act done for a cause transcending individual interest loses its character of prostitution, and acquires a new content; the form of mercenary love would hide the reality of disinterested devotion to a cause, and love of humanity."

"The various Christian sects are trying to constitute themselves the custodians of monogamy and *the conventional sexual morality*, as the only remunerative employment left them except 'charity,' after the loss of public interest in 'God,' 'Christ,' &c."†

* "Questions of the Day."

† "Outlooks from the New Standpoint," pp. 123-156.

And Bebel once more :

"Human beings must be in a position to act as freely, where the strongest impulse is concerned, as in the case of any other natural instinct. The gratification of the sexual impulse is as strictly the affair of the individual as the gratification of any other natural instinct. No one has to give an account of himself or herself, and no third person has the slightest right to interfere."*

"If a woman has the right by nature, and consequently the duty, of exercising her brains to the utmost . . . she must have also precisely the same right to preserve her equilibrium *by quickening the circulation of her blood* in whatever way seems good to her."†

Bebel quotes this from Reichardt Stromberg, and adds that, "without the slightest moral indignation, Goethe had wasted the enthusiasm of his great soul on one woman after another. Every reasonable soul regards this as perfectly natural, *precisely because a great soul is difficult to satisfy*, and only the narrow-minded moralist stops to blame him. Why, then, blame the great souls among women?" &c.

Among the apostles of Socialism and the stars of the Fabian Society is Mr. Grant Allen, the novelist, who, in his book "The Woman Who Did" (the object of which is to glorify "Free Love," and which speaks of marriage as accursed), says :

"No man, indeed, is truly civilised till he can say in all sincerity to every woman of all the women he loves, to every woman of all the women who love him : 'Give me what you can of your love and of yourself ; but never strive for my sake to deny any love, to strangle any impulse, that pants for breath within you. Give me what you can, while you can, without grudging ; but the moment you feel you love me no more, don't pollute your body by yielding it up to a man you have ceased to desire ; don't do injustice to your own prospective children by giving them a father whom you no longer respect, or admire, or yearn for. Guard your chastity well. Be mine as much as you will ; but before all things be your own ; embrace and follow every instinct of

* "Woman in the Past, Present, and Future," p. 229.

† Ibid., p. 230.

pure love that Nature, our mother, has implanted within you.' No woman, in turn, is truly civilised till she can say to every man of all the men she loves, of all the men who love her : ' Give me what you can of your love and of yourself ; but don't think I am so vile, and so selfish, and so poor as to desire to monopolise you. Respect me enough never to give me your body without giving me your heart ; never to make me the mother of children whom you desire not and love not.' When men and women can say that alike, the world will be civilised. Until they can say it truly, the world will be, as now, a jarring battle-field for the monopolist instincts."

Since the above-mentioned book was issued, Mr. Grant Allen has been interviewed by a representative of *To-Day*. Being asked why he promulgated his theory through the medium of a novel, he answered :

"I want to get at women, and especially at young women who are still plastic, and may yet be susceptible to influence. I want to say to these : ' Your purity, of which you make so much, is an artificial product, which can only be kept up at the expense of unspeakable misery to thousands of other women who are sacrificed on your account. Are you prepared to go calmly on without heeding that sacrifice ? Are you ready to let these poor wretches suffer and die in order that you may be kept as good marketable commodities for the men who want to buy ? '"

On being asked further what were the outlines of his system, Mr. Allen said :

"I should say myself every adult, man and woman, ought naturally to form a union of affection at the moment when such unions are normally possible. If this were the rule, we should have neither celibacy nor the social evil. Get rid of mediæval preconceptions, and our problem solves itself. No young man innocently beginning life would take by preference to vulgar vice if he could blamelessly and openly form such an union with a woman he loved and the woman who loved him."*

* A correspondent of the *Liberty Review* of March 23, 1895, referring to some remarks of the editor in the previous issue says : " Your criticism of the Phallic philosophy of Grant Allen is just what

Mr. G. Bernard Shaw says:

"In Ibsen's play, 'Ghosts,' . . . a clergyman and a married woman fall in love with one another. The woman proposes to abandon her husband and live with the clergyman. He recalls her to her duty, and makes her behave as a virtuous woman. She afterwards tells him that this was a crime on his part, and Ibsen agrees with her."*

Mr. Shaw agrees with Ibsen. Mr. Clement Scott agrees with neither, but, in Mr. Shaw's words: "He believes that when you are brought round to her opinion you will be morally corrupted." And so you will. Every uncorrupted mind will instinctively say this.

Mr. Clement Scott further declares, in his criticism of "Ghosts," that "he has been exhorted to laugh at honour, to disbelieve in love, to mock at virtue, to distrust friendship, and to deride at fidelity." Whereupon Mr. Shaw says: "Mr. Scott's criticism was hardly distinguished from hundreds of others which appeared simultaneously. *His opinion was the vulgar opinion.*" To be moral is to be vulgar; to be immoral is to be cultured! These are the new ethics—the ethics of Socialism.

Professor Schaffle says:

"The reform of the family in the direction of 'Free Love' and 'Equal' State education (as proposed by

is wanted. Cannot you imagine a congress of Fabian Free Lovers, 'as fed horses in the morning, everyone neighing after his neighbour's wife'? Perchance it will all end in the cry of 'Free Fornication for the unemployed,' which, coupled with 'Free' meals, would be an appropriate Socialistic form of '*panem et circenses*.' It is intensely interesting to notice that, while freedom of fornication would be the only genuinely free thing left, competition would certainly creep in, and the most desirable individuals would get more than their average share. How would Grant Allen and his Fabian 'Comrades' arrange for this? How would they provide for the residuum, the 'submerged tenth' of ugliness and deformity whom nobody would embrace at any price? Of course, as citizens, they would be entitled to 'demand the gratification of their natural instincts' at the hands of the State, and the difficulty could only be met by Government providing a competent and self-sacrificing staff of male and female courtesans. The whole question is one of some delicacy, and requires the warm Celtic imagination of Grant Allen for its solution."

* "Quintessence of Ibsen," p. 6.

Socialists) has a significance, not only for the preservation and renewal of population, but also, and this in a higher degree than almost any other question, for the *personal happiness of individuals*. . . . What would be the result upon the happiness of the people if there were no longer any binding marriage union, if marriage were to become a contract which could at any time be entered into or dissolved, and that was not in any sense binding? The great majority of the weaker sex would lose the assurance of the support of the stronger; and the adjustment of the inequality of wage-earning power between the sexes, which to-day is accomplished by the stable marriage union, would be lost without the woman's being able to gain any more through her emancipation than she really possesses to-day through the man, or can earn by her own capacity. An immense proportion of the happiness engendered by the love of husband and wife, parent and child, would be destroyed, and the true and purely human nobility of the office of propagation be lost; or, at the very least, all this happiness would be constantly threatened, and never in any degree secure. . . . The new Hetærisism of free love reduces man to a refined animal, society to a refined herd, a superior race of dogs and apes, even though all would become productive labourers, and spend a few hours daily in manual labour. . . . [Under Socialism] the children, almost from their birth and cradle, would be the children of the nation, not of the family. . . . It would destroy the love of parents for their children, and of children to their parents. . . . A really consistent Communism would not admit free love according to individual choice, but rather love by turns, regulated on a basis of equality, the actual supply of women for all men desiring them, and *vice versa*, a universal sex-communism, the Hetærisism no longer of the horde, but of the organised Social State."

Mr. G. Bernard Shaw, in an article on "Socialism in the Twentieth Century," which appeared in *Great Thoughts* (a journal which claims to be very superior in tone and morals, and even makes pretensions to religion) of March 9, 1895, said:

"If you are an idle landlord you will find your land being bought from you, plot by plot, for public purposes; and you

will at the same time find your unearned income being taxed shilling by shilling, *and at last you will find yourself with all your land sold and all your income extinguished.* Under these circumstances you will not apprentice your son to your own trade. If you are an idle shareholder, you will find your income being *taxed out of existence* without even the landlord resource of selling land. You will regret the good old times. If you are an incorrigible idler, or casual ward tramp, or if you are too much of a gentleman to work for your living, in the twentieth century you will be compelled to support yourself by work in a penal colony. Nobody will lend you money because you will not be able to pretend, as you do now, that you have tried to get work and failed.

"I think this is enough for the present. It sounds Utopian ; but *I have carefully left the Utopian part out*, and have confined myself strictly to mere extensions of what is already going on. All that I have forecast has happened to some people already ; and some of it will happen to all people before the twenty-first century, if the rate of progress of the last ten years continues."

The "Utopian part" is, of course, that which relates to the abolition of marriage, the establishment of concubinage, free love, free fornication, the destruction of the family, &c. Perhaps even *Great Thoughts* could not stomach that.